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USSR Report

MILITARY AFFAIRS

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USSR REPORT MILITARY AFFAIRS

CONTENTS

WARSAW PACT

- Maj Gen Ivanov Discusses Importance of Night Training
(M. Ivanov; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 19 Jul 86) 1

ARMED FORCES

- Training Must Represent Realistic Combat Conditions
(Editorial; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 12 Jul 86) 5

- Tasks, Problems of Spring Induction Discussed
(L. L. Sharashenidze Interview; MOLODEZH GRUZII, 17 Apr 86) 8

- Letters to KRASNAYA ZVEZDA Editor, Responses: 15 June-7 July 1986
(KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, various dates) 12

- Transport Personnel Disciplined 12
Authorization for Purchasing Privileges 12
Housing Assignments Criticized 13
Officials Disregard Letters 13
Book Supplier Criticized 14
Efficiency of Construction Operations Discussed 14
Cadet Performance Criticized 18
Editors Review Mailbag 19
Energy-Saving Measures Introduced 21

GROUND FORCES

- GSFG: High Expense, Low Results of Tank Fire Training
(S. Ivanov; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 16 Jul 86) 22

AIR/AIR DEFENSE FORCES

Discussion of Training in SAM Battery (A. Dokuchayev; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 16 Jul 86)	24
Col Gen Reshetnikov Discusses Career in Air Fleet Day Article (V. V. Reshetnikov; KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, 17 Aug 86)	26

NAVAL FORCES

Service on Northern Fleet Submarines Described (G. Savichev; IZVESTIYA, 19 Jul 86)	30
Navoytsev Interview on Soviet Navy Day (Petr Nikolayevich Navoytsev Interview; SOVETSKIY PATRIOT, 27 Jul 86)	34
Kuznetsov Interview on Naval Aviation (Georgiy Andreyevich Kuznetsov Interview; NEDEL'YA, No 33, 11-17 Aug 86)	38
Work of Bouy Tender Discussed (V. Mikhaylov; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 23 Aug 86)	43

MILITARY EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Historical Development of Military-Legal Education (A. Koblikov; SOTSIALISTICHESKAYA ZAKONNOST, No 7, 1986)	46
--	----

FOREIGN MILITARY AFFAIRS

Increased Tempo of U.S. Strategic Forces Development (F. Andreyev; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 15 Jul 86)	50
Offensive Character of Rogers' Plan, NATO (L. Korzun; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 15 Jul 86)	52
U.S. Sale of Advanced Conventional Weapons to 'Clients' (N. Gnevushev; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 17 Jul 86)	55
South African Military Threat to Neighboring States Viewed (V. Silanin; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 19 Jul 86)	58
Growth of Japanese Forces in 'Northern Sector' (V. Vinogradov; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 15 Jul 86)	61

AFGHANISTAN

Life Among MiG-23 Pilots in DRA Recounted (A. Borovik; SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, 17 Jun 86)	63
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WARSAW PACT

MAJ GEN IVANOV DISCUSSES IMPORTANCE OF NIGHT TRAINING

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 19 Jul 86 p 2

[Article by Maj Gen M. Ivanov, Deputy Commander for Combat Training of the Northern Group of Forces, under the rubric "The Commander and Modern Combat": "Ordered to Attack at Night"]

[Text] What has to be done in order to fully implement the principle of teaching the troops that which is essential in a war? One thinks about this particularly seriously right now, when the summer training is in full swing. After all, the summer training period must be a decisive stage in the struggle to improve quality indices in the combat and political training and to achieve good end results in the competition.

And experience has shown that the arsenal of our commanders, staffs and services contain many methods and means of achieving maximum combat intensity in the training process, of creating a situation which truly approaches actual combat.

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of night drills, classes and exercises in this respect. It is perfectly clear that training the personnel to engage in night combat operations requires enhancing their field training in general and constitutes a complex, multifaceted process requiring the coordinated efforts of all the command and control elements. Most subunits and units base the planning and the organization of night training on this.

I shall discuss just a few lessons from the night drills and exercises recently conducted.

The reinforced tank battalion commanded by Major V. Pletmintsev, operating in the advance guard, was assigned the mission of capturing an advantageous position at night and supporting the commitment of the main regimental forces to the battle. With the onset of darkness the subunits, after making a march, swiftly attacked the "enemy."

The offensive was developed successfully in the beginning. Specifically, the company commanded by Guards Senior Lieutenant N. Fedotov conducted effective fire and advanced rapidly, preventing the defenders from regrouping personnel and equipment and threatening to reach their flank and rear area. The pace of the attack then slowed, however. Taking advantage of this, the "enemy" regrouped his forces and practically halted the attack. Not until the reserve had been committed to the battle did the battalion commander make a favorable breakthrough in the single combat.

And now let us analyze the actions of the tankmen to the entire depth of the assigned mission, so to speak. What contributed to their success during the first phase of the exercise?

First of all, it was the battalion commander's personal tactical skill and the painstaking and thoughtful work performed by the officers when they organized the battle. Good reconnaissance was conducted, command and control and interaction were well conceived. All of the subunit commanders checked the night vision devices to see that they were ready for use. Camouflage discipline was strictly observed during the move....

All of this was still not enough, it turned out, to achieve success in the training battle. The precise interaction seen in the attack on the defenders' forward position did not exist during the battle in the depth. As a result, the right-flank company, commanded by Guards Senior Lieutenant Fedotov, as we have already learned, pushed far ahead and lost fire contact with subunits operating at the center of the battle formation and on the left flank. There was nothing for the battalion commander to do but to halt the company's advance and commit the reserve to the battle.

I am discussing this in detail because, in my opinion, shortcomings were demonstrated in it which are typical of the actions of certain commanders in the organization of combat, including night combat. Especially typical is the fact that the subunit commanders do not always think through their actions to the entire depth of the missions when they decide on matters of personnel and equipment control.

Let us begin with the fact that Guards Major Pletmintsev did not fully work out even his own place in the battalion's battle formation. His vehicle was behind the company which achieved success in the first phase of the exercise. As a result the battalion commander broke away from the main forces and essentially lost control of them.

One could say that the battalion did complete the mission. Yes, it did. But at what cost? The battalion commander was left without a reserve, after all. And in real combat, as front-line experience demonstrated, this can have serious consequences. Unfortunately, in the exercises, including those involving live firing, when we are attacking only a hypothetical enemy and firing at targets which will not return the fire, we frequently forget about this and do not encourage the trainees to be creative, to seek ways to achieve successes not with numbers but with know-how.

The night battle.... The history of the Great Patriotic War contains numerous examples proving that the skillful use of darkness helped our troops gain victory over an enemy with superiority in numerical strength and armament. There is a great deal of instructional value in this respect also in today's combat training experience. In one of the exercises, for example, the battalion commanded by Major L. Vorontsov, holder of the Red Star Order, had to break through a prepared defense at night. The battalion commander understood that this would not be easy. He maneuvered on the battlefield, succeeded in deceiving the "enemy" with respect to the axis of the attack, forced him to begin regrouping his forces and then began an attack from an unexpected direction.

This maneuver by Major Vorontsov might not appear to have been particularly clever. It was not an easy one to execute, however. It required especially good professional skill on the part of the commanders, combat coordination and training on the part of the subunits. All of this was demonstrated. Understanding night combat very well, Major Vorontsov was able to take full advantage of those factors which would contribute to success.

Unfortunately, this was certainly not true in all cases. Certain subunit commanders, the first summer training results have shown, simply underestimate the significance of night training in the overall system of personnel training and indoctrination, and engage in various kinds of indulgences and simplifications.

In one tactical exercise, for example, prior to a night battle, I saw the tankmen install peculiar blinkers on their armored equipment to designate their battle order. I had to explain the obvious to the men: in actual combat the enemy too would see the blinkers.

Or take the following example. When the experienced commander organizes a night battle, in addition to everything else, he will always indicate for the subunits reference points visible at night or the course azimuths, designate a lead company or platoon and explain the procedure for using the night vision devices, lighting up the area and the targets. This is very important, because unskillful use of the night vision devices and the illumination equipment has an adverse effect. Certain officers, even experienced ones, do not handle this with the proper sense of responsibility, however. As a result, the night vision devices and illumination equipment are sometimes not a help but a hindrance in a night battle. This is precisely what happened in an exercise involving the motorized rifle battalion commanded until recently by Guards Major P. Lukashuk. In the dynamics of the battle he did not achieve precise interaction with the artillery. As a result, Guards Major Lukashuk's men were themselves blinded.

Errors of this kind result primarily from omissions in the training of battalion and company commanders. In this case, for example, the battalion commander did not properly explain the situation with respect to interaction with attached and supporting subunits. I am confident that this was not because he did not want to. The trouble stems entirely from the fact that in some places little attention is still being given to matters of interaction among diverse personnel and equipment. This is true of both the preparation of commanders and the training of the personnel. We talk a lot about combining classes in the various training subjects with tactical training. What do we actually see, however? The motorized rifle-men and tankmen train on their own, the artillery and engineer troops on their own. And joint operations, if any, are only encountered in exercises.

Naturally, with this approach to the training it is difficult to count on precise interaction in a battle. Joint exercises involving both officers and subunits of various branches of troops and special troops, including night exercises, during which questions of interaction are worked out at the practical level, are an extremely important condition for enhancing the effectiveness and the quality of the field training for the troops as a whole.

I believe the following should also be discussed. In the units and subunits in general those who permit indulgences and simplifications are being held more

strictly accountable. The party organizations are focusing attention on this. Such matters as the ability of the personnel to carry out missions during a transition from daytime to night operations and vice versa, however, are frequently bypassed.

I recall the following incident, for instance. Guards Major S. Shcherbakov's men performed fairly successfully in the exercise during the day. When it grew dark, however, they were not the same men. It turned out that they were not prepared either morally or with respect to material support to operate in a situation of limited visibility. In other words, the men went to the field precisely oriented only toward daytime [operations].

This and other instances of poor preparation of subunits to operate under special conditions, including night conditions, were assessed from a standpoint of principle. Steps to improve the night training of the personnel, particularly that of the officers, were discussed at a meeting of the military council of the group of forces. This involves stepping up control over the organization and the conduct of night drills, classes and exercises, studying and adopting the experience of commanders who have achieved the best results in the preparation of subordinates to operate under difficult conditions, including night conditions, being more demanding of those in charge for the fulfillment of training plans and programs, the effective use of the training materials and equipment base, and so forth.

It can be assumed that all of this will be of benefit. Specifically, we have already achieved a situation in which every night exercise ends with practice in interaction and fire control within a subunit. The target ranges and other facilities of the training base are being improved in accordance with the requirements for night training for the troops. In short, as we decide matters having to do with enhancing the preparation of the personnel to operate under special conditions, we proceed from the premise that the ability of the troops to engage in combat at night is one of the most important indicators of their fighting capacity and their preparedness to carry out any mission.

11499

CSO: 1801/232

ARMED FORCES

TRAINING MUST REPRESENT REALISTIC COMBAT CONDITIONS

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 12 Jul 86 p 1

[Editorial: "Competition by Task and Norm"]

[Text] The CPSU Central Committee's Appeal to the Workers of the Soviet Union, approved at the July 1986 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, stressed the fact that socialist competition is a powerful mobilizing factor. Permeating the entire training process, it must be directed toward enhancing the military work, improving the political, military and moral indoctrination of the personnel, and strengthening discipline, organization and regulation order.

The competition initiated in the army and navy with the slogan "We Shall Fulfill the 27th CPSU Congress Decisions and Reliably Protect the Gains of Socialism!" is taking place in an atmosphere of comradely rivalry and mutual assistance. Determined and effective work on the part of every commander, staff officer, political worker and serviceman, each in his own section, constant and exacting analysis of the competition results, and demandingness based on party principle of those in charge, for the quality of the combat training received by subordinates--all of this comprises the basis for success in the struggle for good end results, for effectiveness in every class.

The criterion for assessing the field, air and naval training of the servicemen is their preparedness for combat in complex situations. It should be constantly borne in mind that heightened demands are being made of the personnel's training due to the increased capabilities of modern means of armed struggle. In the training and indoctrination of the fightingmen, the stress must be on undeviatingly implementing the principle of teaching that which is essential in a war, on making the employment of the weapons and equipment more effective, boldly introducing new combat methods and techniques into the training practices, improving the fire and tactical training, and creating combat intensity. Skilfully and precisely organized competition by task and norm is an important means of achieving these goals and accelerating the combat training.

The more attention commanders and political workers give to organizing the competition in a spirit of combat rivalry, the higher will be the quality of the classes, of the field, air and naval training of the personnel. Inertia, formalism and simplification are especially intolerable in this matter. The very process must discipline the personnel and accurately orient the people toward

the improvement of quality indices in the military work. If a unit or a ship is not advancing perceptibly in the combat training, a thorough study must be made to see how intense the struggle is for end results in all areas of the training and the service of the personnel. Vigorous steps must be taken at once to eliminate inertia and conservatism. It must become the constant concern of commanders, staffs and political organs to persistently establish the course toward enhancing the combat and political training and the intensity of the training process, to resolutely and uncompromisingly combat showiness, indulgences and simplifications, and to ensure that the competition is effective.

Commanders, party and Komsomol organizations should strive more vigorously to involve the servicemen in the struggle to achieve excellence in the performance of the combat training tasks and to surpass the norms. They need to strive to get the army and navy fightingmen to perform at a level higher than their rating in every class, exercise and cruise, destroy targets with the first shot, at maximum range and in minimal amounts of time, successfully accomplish the missions at reduced strength, and meet daytime norms while performing at night.

Competition by task and norm is organized in accordance with these demands in air regiment "X" of Far East District Air Forces. In one tactical air exercise the squadron commanded by Major A. Kosilov was assigned the mission of making a night attack on an "enemy" airfield. The tactical situation was a complex one. The mission had to be carried out within the shortest possible period of time. The airmen demonstrated sure and solid skills and tactical sharpness. Despite this, the regimental commander did not give all of them the highest rating for their performance. He made more rigid demands of the first-class pilots. Yes, they had met the norms. They did not demonstrate an improved skill level, however, or improve on their previous performance. The second-class pilots performed at the first-class level, though. During the critique of the exercise and when the competition results were summed up, the regimental commander demonstrated that the more experienced airmen would have surpassed many norms if they had made an all-out effort. It was recommended that the unit methods council provide precise time, quality and quantity indices by which the airmen's combat performance could be evaluated more objectively and demandingly, taking their individual preparation into account.

Competition effectiveness depends primarily upon the commander's organizing efforts. The organization of the competition is a regulation duty of his. Relying upon the party and Komsomol organizations and directing their efforts toward the accomplishment of the entire group of combat and political training tasks facing the unit or ship at the contemporary stage, every commander is the direct organizer of competitions for the title of best specialist, best section, crew, team and subunit. He must always remember that success in the fulfillment of commitments and the state of affairs in the subunit and unit and on the ship is determined primarily by what is called the human factor--by the vigor and the creative quest of the people. Maximum precision, objectivity and principle are demanded of the commander when summing up the competition results. Attempts to embellish the situation must be resolutely halted, and the competition must be freed of formalism.

One of the important areas of party-political work is to make the competition more effective and to maintain its intensity. It is the duty of party organs,

party and Komsomol organizations to see that the Communists and Komsomol members set the example in classes and exercises, on flights and cruises, in the effort to create an atmosphere of rivalry in them and in the struggle to fulfill the commitments. It is important to extol the most worthy people, those who set an example in the training, the service and their personal conduct, and who work purposefully and persistently to publicize and introduce the know-how of the best people in the army and navy, the masters of the combat specialties.

One of the important ways to effectively improve the personnel's training is to wage an intense struggle to accomplish the combat training tasks completely and well, and to reduce the time norms for working with the weapons and equipment.

11499

CSO: 1801/232

ARMED FORCES

TASKS, PROBLEMS OF SPRING INDUCTION DISCUSSED

Tbilisi MOLODEZH GRUZII in Russian 17 Apr 86 p 4

[Interview with Major General L. L. Sharashenidze, Georgian military commissar, by GRUZINFORM correspondent V. Golovin: "Spring Induction: High Tasks and Main Problems", date and place not given]

[Text] The time for the spring induction of young men for service in the armed forces of the country has come. GRUZINFORM correspondent V. Golovin discusses with the Georgian SSR military commissar Maj Gen L. L. Sharashenidze how it will be conducted and the tasks which must be accomplished in accordance with the USSR laws on general military obligations.

--The 1986 spring induction begins in the middle of April and continues until the middle of July," Levan Levanovich reported, "for all citizens who have reached their 18th year and do not have a deferment from induction including students in higher educational institutes who have completed the regular school year."

"I'll tell you straight away how this year differs from previous years. First, students in all types of education and higher educational institutes will henceforth only be called up once a year, in the spring after the completion of the examination session. This is so young men who reach 18 between July and December can finish the regular term and will be called into the army the next spring. Second, candidates for continued foreign service will be determined by the republic draft commission only, and the city and rayon military commissariat will be relieved of this responsibility.

The induction will take place in complete accordance with the requirements set out by the 27th CPSU Congress in which it was emphasized that an important task in ideological and educational work of the party is military and patriotic education, forming the readiness to defend the socialist homeland, to give it all of its efforts and if required even ones life.

Of course, not all the young men who are called into the army are disciplined and tempered, ready to withstand the strain of military service from the beginning. But this will take place faster and better if the young men are prepared to accomplish their duty. Therefore, along with the Georgian

Ministries of Education, Higher and Middle Special Education and Health, the State Committee for Vocational and Technical Education, the Komsomol and DOSAAF central committees and other ministries and agencies we have and will conduct much work for further improvement of the military and party education, and the moral, psychological, and physical preparation of young people, and preventive medicine for them. This no doubt, will make it possible for young men to be drawn into the rhythm of life in a military collective, to master their speciality and to become skilled soldiers more rapidly."

"It is certain that young men who are drafted from the Leninskiy and October rayons of Tbilisi, the Adzharassr ASSR, the cities of Poti, Rustavi and Tkvarcheli and the Zestafonskiy rayons where this kind of well coordinated work is being conducted will serve their homeland exactly this way. The Saburtalin and Ordzhonikidze military commissariats in the republic capital where the workers have taken the proper steps as a result of strict criticism have improved their activities.

[Question] The 27th CPSU Congress set up the task to realign the ideological and indoctrination work, and perfect the military patriotic indoctrination and training of the total population to defend the homeland under the condition of a sharply increased ideological struggle in the international arena and the growth of the military threat. Would you expound on what is being done toward this in our republic?

[Answer] The new edition of the CPSU program plainly stated that each communist and each Soviet man is responsible to do everything within his power to maintain the nation's defensive capability at the required level. Therefore, we may say proudly that our republic has a system of education in fundamental military matters for the future generations by DOSAAF in middle schools, professional--technical schools, technical schools, higher education institutes and schools.

In Adzhari, for example, there is monthly and weekly mass defense work, in Abkhazii there is a growing number of peoples universities and clubs with a military patriotic theme and in Yugo-Osetii lecturing bureaus have been created for draft and pre-draft age people. Propaganda on the heroic traditions, preparing young men for service, the selection and direction toward military academies of those who have already been called up is being conducted on a wide front also in the Gldanskiy Rayon in Tbilisi and in the Kutaisi, Tkibuli, Akhaltsikhskiy, Marneulskiy and Sagaredzhoyskiy Rayons. Graduates of many schools in Tbilisi, Sukhumi, Batumi, Tskhinvali, Rustavi, and Telavi are serving meritoriously in the army and navy. Military commissariats in Abkhazskiy ASSR and Adzharskiy ASSR and the Mayakovskiy, Khelvachurskiy and other rayons have become fundamental centers for preparing young patriots for military service. Conferences, gatherings and meetings of draftees and their parents, three generation meetings, inspections and competitions, military sports games and spartacades are being held in many republic cities and rayons. It has become a tradition to have the republic muster of draftees on the threshold of the victory celebration. All of this work is being perfected, the best experience is being generalized and new interesting forms are being used.

But today the level of political, moral and psychological and physical preparation of the young generation in the army and navy must be much higher than before. This not only forces a search for new methods of working with young men but also to eliminate deficiencies and take concrete steps to solve eminent problems. We must not accept what has happened in the Ambrolaurskiy, Akhalkalaskiy, Gegechkorskiy, Gardabanskiy, Dushetskiy, Dmanisskiy, Kvarelskiy, Mestiyskiy, Ochamchirskiy, Tianetskiy, and Tsalkskiy Rayons where the necessary amount of attention was not paid to the question of preparing young men for military service and the preservice indoctrination of young men has been weak. This work is like a campaign here and is frequently timed to various ceremonial dates and to the induction period. There are cases when the induction of draftees to the army is done formally. In many agricultural rayons Russian language training is very weak in educational institutes. Also the workers in the medical commissions and the military commissariat do not always achieve the best results.

Along with party and Soviet organs we will do everything to achieve a fundamental change in the style, forms and methods of work from measures of general characteristics of moving to concrete organizational work in specific locations. This really concerns the unceasing struggle with alcoholism, hooliganism, idleness, parasitism and the appearance of bourgeois ideological, nationalist and religious vestiges among the young people. Individual indoctrination will be strengthened for every future military member within his work or educational collective and in his home and family. It is necessary to actively bring party, military and labor veterans and the military reserves into the work with young people.

[Question] Spring is not only the time for the draft but also for those who are thinking about going to military academy to make a final decision. It is also the duty of the military commissariat to help young men to orient themselves towards the selection of the military profession...

[Answer] The coordination of efforts by republic party and Soviet organs, and all interested ministries and agencies have already given reasonably good results here. The attraction of young people into the military educational institute has grown. Beginning with 1984 our republic has sent as a minimum two cadets to each military academy in the country with many from mountain and agricultural rayons. Many of the young men have begun to go to air and naval academies. In many cities and rayons effective propaganda of the heroic professions of officers has been maintained and meetings of young men with sailors, border guards and aviators have taken place for those who have decided to go to military academies.

But even here not everything is going well. A significant number of our people who are sent do not hold up to the stress or do not master the Russian language program and there is a clear lack of responsibility. And really, they were prepared at home and state resources were expended on them and these were entrusted in them! Therefore our task, primarily, together with the Komsomol organs and parents, is to conduct concrete work with each candidate in training so that he will well understand the specifics of the profession awaiting him and have a sufficient knowledge and a sense of the responsibility delegated to him by the republic.

[Question] Levan Levanovich, it was noted from the platform of the 27th Georgian Communist Party Congress that: "To a significant degree the quality of work of the draft commissions depends on the availability of well equipped draft centers. Today in the republic almost 20 percent of the rayon and city military commissions do not have such centers." What is used for these points and why are they not in all rayons?

[Answer] Induction (muster) centers are the complexes of properly equipped facilities where the future soldier is processed. Everything must be done to avoid crowding, disturbances, errors, confusion and to create a calm, amiable atmosphere. We have in mind not only the comfortable arrangement for the inductees of the offices for ophthalmology; eye, ear, nose and throat; gastrointestinal; neurological, therapeutic and surgical examinations, but also cloakrooms, dressing rooms, rooms for filling out forms and checking out documents and a cafeteria. And, of course, an agitation area with a television; portable film projector; colorful, slick agitation publications; newspapers; magazines and board games. This is exactly where the draftees are met, discussions and lectures are held for them and they are provided with leisure time. Work in the agitation area is done according to a plan with the agreement of the rayon party committee.

But, as rightfully noted in the republic communist forum, military commission committees do not always have such conditions. But this is not our fault alone. In the USSR laws on the general military responsibility it specifically says that the councils of ministers of union and autonomous republics and executive councils of peoples deputies have the responsibility to provide the military commissariat with induction (muster) centers specially equipped for this work and to assign the necessary number of doctors, technical workers and service personnel."

But through the fault of the executive committees the military commissariat in Kalininskiy city, Tbilisi, Ambrolaurskiy, Aspindzskiy, Akhmetskiy, Adigenskiy, Bogdanovskiy, Galskiy, Kazbegskiy, Makharadzevskiy, Marneulskiy, Mestiyskiy, Onskiy, and Chokhataurskiy Rayons process draftees in offices which are not adequate for medical examinations and with crowds of people or they rent outside areas. What can one say about the effectiveness of the work in the agitation areas? Moreover in the republic capital along with the Ordzhonikidzevskiy military commissariat there is the recently created Saburtalinskiy military commissariat which has for two year been unable to get its own building, Therefore, the two military commissariats are sharing a single center ill-equipped for one.

As you can see, there are many problems requiring immediate solutions. Actually, evaluating the results of our work and being aware of all of their responsibilities to the party and the people, the workers in our military commissariat are doing everything in their power so that the army and navy will receive reinforcements from Georgia this spring and the beginning of the summer which will be of merit. We wish you success in your service, countrymen!

ARMED FORCES

LETTERS TO KRASNAYA ZVEZDA EDITOR, RESPONSES: 15 JUNE — 7 JULY 1986

Transport Personnel Disciplined

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 15 Jun 86 p 2

[Text] "They didn't have anything to do...." — this was the title under which on April 8, 1986 we published a commentary by Lieutenant Colonel M. Ziyeminsh on an open letter to Soviet Army drivers. These remarks focused on serious shortcomings in the operation of equipment at the motor vehicle and machinery facility.

As the chief of the construction directorate of the Volga Military District, Colonel V. Lisitsyn, reported to the editors, this criticism was acknowledged to be valid. The former chief of the motor pool, Major A. Grigoryev, and the chief of the operations section, A. Lindkvist, a civilian employee of the Soviet Army, who failed to maintain proper records of loads transported, to insure proper and efficient use of motor transport and to fill out documents properly, have been disciplined and held liable financially.

Measures designed to remedy the situation described by the newspaper have been discussed by both the party organization and an open meeting of the collective. The district construction directorate has made the necessary assistance available to the motor pool.

Authorization for Purchasing Privileges

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 19 Jun 86 p 4

[Text] KRASNAYA ZVEZDA once described a system of privileges granted on military bases to families with large numbers of children involving special considerations connected with the purchase of consumer goods for the family. The right to these privileges, of course, must be confirmed in the form of some special certification. Who grants this certification to personnel living on a military facility?

A. Bosenko

The privileges referred to in this letter are granted by the Main Trade Directorate of the USSR Ministry of Defense to large families living on remote and isolated facilities. At times convenient to the families, they can go to assigned department stores and other nonfood military exchanges to buy children's articles. In accordance with procedures jointly agreed upon by the commander, the political authorities and the exchange system, large families can purchase food from food stores on the basis of orders submitted previously. Certification granting these buying privileges is issued by the unit commander [komandir chasti].

Housing Assignments Criticized

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 20 Jun 86 p 2

[Text] "New home no occasion to celebrate" — this was the title under which on May 8 we published a letter from Lieutenant Colonel of Justice I. Vashkevich concerning shortcomings in the distribution of housing at one of the bases in the Northern Caucasus Military District.

As Major General V. Zakurdayev, deputy district commander for construction and billeting, reported to the editors, the newspaper article was discussed at a meeting of the chiefs of the billeting units in the district, while the chairman of the housing committee, Lieutenant Colonel B. Kostyukov, was disciplined and called to account before the party. The garrison commander and his deputy for political affairs were counseled on the problem which had arisen involving the assignment and use of housing. Instructions were given in the case of housing to be assigned to Senior Warrant Officer M. Zhuravlev and his large family.

Officials Disregard Letters

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 20 Jun 86 p 2

[Text] "Answered ... but is that all there is to it?" — this was the title under which on May 7 we published a letter from N. Gladilin. He had written concerning an irresponsible, neglectful attitude toward letters from local citizens which had been shown by officials of the Uzbek SSR military commissariat and the Kirovskiy and Chilianzarskiy rayon commissariats in Tashkent.

Major General Yu. Pankratov, first deputy chief of the political administration of the Turkestan Military District, has reported to the editors that the facts in this instance were correct. The chief of the political section of the Uzbek SSR military commissariat, Colonel A. Rubeko, has been counseled concerning disregard for letters, suggestions and requests from citizens. The military commissars of the Kirovskiy and Chilianzarskiy rayon military commissariats in Tashkent, Colonels Sh. Muatarov and D. Zarvirog, have been reprimanded and called to account before the party. Majors A. Gribko and G. Leonov have also been reprimanded. Gribko, a communist, has also been held accountable by the party.

Book Supplier Criticized

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Jun 86 p 2

[Text] "They did write back" — this was the title under which on May 31 we published a letter from Colonel V. Polezhayev. He wrote concerning departures from regulations governing the book trade in the military exchange store managed by V. Kochergina and the purely formalistic approach a number of exchange personnel have taken toward letters and complaints from customers.

As Major General N. Sadovnikov, chief of the Main Trade Directorate of the USSR Ministry of Defense, reported to the editors, the appearance of this article in the newspaper was followed up by an inspection of the operation of the book store. This inspection turned up a number of shortcomings not only in the organization of the book exchange and the bibliographic reference service, but also in the form of a lack of record-keeping in connection with the arrival and sale of hard-to-get literature. The chief of the exchange system, Lieutenant V. Svyatchenko, has been reprimanded for gross shortcomings in operations for which he is responsible. The chief of the trade section, N. Novikova, and the manager of the book store, V. Kochergina, have been severely reprimanded.

Employees of the directorate headed by Colonel V. Tsyplakov have been sternly counseled on the need to improve the way they handle letters and complaints from customers. The party held a meeting in connection with the problem and conducted a serious discussion of problems described in letters from customers.

The store has now moved to a better location with new equipment and facilities. It has also opened a second-hand book section and set up a bibliographical reference table.

Efficiency of Construction Operations Discussed

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 28 Jun 86 p 2

[Text] On March 29 KRASNAYA ZVEZDA published an article by Colonel General K. Vertelov entitled "Our Construction Program — What Should it Be Like?" It touched on problems involved in improving the efficiency of operations at military construction sites and suggested a number of specific steps which should be taken to accomplish the task set forth by the 27th Congress of the CPSU: convert all aspects of construction production into a single industrial complex. It was the view of the writer that one of these steps should be to go over to a modular approach to construction.

This article has generated lively interest among readers, as the volume of mail the editors have received attests. They support the ideas expressed in the article and discuss ways in which these ideas can be realized.

Today we are publishing a number of these responses from our readers. Future discussion of this subject will be published as a regular feature entitled "The Construction Program — What Should It Be Like?"

Don't Fall Behind the Times

We are all aware that bold decisions and innovative action are now required to implement the program outlined by the 27th Congress of the CPSU and the June plenum of the CPSU Central Committee in the field of construction. The urgent requirement now for a reorientation means a decisive effort to translate the energy that goes into the plans into the energy of practical action and doing this without delay. This is what is most important now, because a great deal of time has already been lost.

When I was the chief production engineer for a large military construction organization, I had occasion to get involved with the development and introduction of a modular approach to our military construction operations. I, too, have had my experience with indifference to innovation and an unconcealed aversion on the part of managers to the assumption of any burden of responsibility or to unnecessary, as they would see them, difficulties, any new things to worry about. To any argument or calculation they would be presented with they could do nothing but repeat that you were just trying to rock the boat, trying to destroy the existing production system without even knowing what you wanted to replace it with. And I'm sure that somebody's still using the same "argument" now. No doubt at all, and here I am in complete agreement with the author of your article when he says that we simply have to forge ahead and search for new approaches.

More than half of the all-service structures the Ministry of Defense is building for its capital construction program are either brick or combination brick and frame structures. These structures are the most labor-intensive type of structure there is, and you have the least amount of time to get the job done to boot. And on top of that, there are frequently occasions when you have to put up these buildings under adverse climatic conditions far from any habitable facilities and without the benefit of any pre-existing construction base.

The modular method would be particularly valuable here, what with the fact that it would sharply reduce the labor requirement on a project. This has long since been an obvious thing. But to this day the number of barracks and other structures which have been put up at our remote "points" using modules would still come to no more than a handful. Experience has shown, however, that buildings only a few stories high can be put up without any foundation by simply stacking the modules up on slabs of road pavement. The job takes literally only a few weeks.

So many different kinds of buildings have already been built using modules—mess halls, workshops, headquarters buildings and housing, for example—that we could in fact speak of what for all practical purposes has been an experimental construction program. And the results have been positive. What we need to do now is to get busy and begin more aggressively to make this positive experience more widely available.

As we change over to building our all-service structures by this new method, we should simultaneously, in my view, begin even now to fabricate more transformer substations, pumping stations and boilers and other facilities on an entirely modular basis. All the more is this the case in view of the fact that there is already a practical basis to build on here. Unfortunately, though, this construction technology, which has already given the best possible account of itself, is not being put to the fullest possible use.

Perhaps the situation looks a little brighter in the case of the transformer substations. The enterprise managed by Colonel M. Chernyy, for example, is now fabricating them entirely at the factory, to include installation of the equipment. When they reach the construction site, all that remains to be done is hook them up. The problem of transporting the prefabricated substations has been solved as well. But in the construction of housing, say, these substations are not used.

Everything I've been talking about here can be accomplished in this very five-year-plan period simply by modernizing and retooling some of our existing enterprises. What we must also do, and do as soon as possible without wasting any time, is undertake a large-scale experiment involving the construction of some, any, new structure using only prefabricated modules available presently.

There will most certainly be sceptics who will insist that impossible difficulties will be encountered in any effort to change over to new tools, new equipment and facilities, new means of transport. But these apprehensions are plainly exaggerated. Experience has shown that prefabricated modules can be transported on the MAZ [Minsk Automobile Works], KrAZ [Kremenchug Automobile Works] and KamAZ [Kama Automobile Works] trucks with only minor modifications of the vehicles. We can put up buildings up to 5 stories high using cranes with a lifting capacity of 20-25 tons.

To transport prefabricated modules by rail presents some difficulties, what with the fact that this does not make full use of the load capacity of the platform. So what's the answer to that? In the first place, this will cut the overall volume of the shipments substantially since the use of prefabricated modules in place of the panelled frame construction will reduce the total weight of a structure some 20-25 per cent and, as compared to a brick structure, cut it almost in half. And in the second place, even if this does entail losses like this, they will be more than compensated by the shorter construction times that will now become possible. Third, the simplicity and standardized design of prefabricated modules makes it possible to set up to make them directly at the construction site itself.

Prefabricated modules would appear to have a particularly bright future in the construction of industrial and other types of operations buildings. But here we can begin to speak not of modules, but rather of modular shells, one of the developers of which, by the way, is the author of the article himself, Colonel General Vertelov. Practical experience has shown that the time it takes to put up even the most complex structures using this approach can be cut by a factor of two or three.

None of this should be understood to mean, of course, that there are no real obstacles in the way of going over to this technology. But the biggest problem has nothing to do with the scientific or engineering end of things. The greatest difficulty lies in the fact that nobody in particular has been made responsible for a changeover to modular construction. As it is now, this approach is used in only isolated instances, with no particular thought being given to the future. We really can't go on this way any longer. What we have to do is begin now to focus seriously on the need to improve the modular shells and the techniques of fabricating, transporting and assembling them and to reduce their cost. It is high time that we get the research and design organizations of the Ministry

of Defense, which have so far remained on the sidelines for all practical purposes, to involve themselves in the solution of these problems, problems, incidentally, such as the design of prefabricated modular buildings for all-service use.

So what we have to do, to put it in a nutshell, is to overcome inertia and the habit a number of managers have of drowning a promising cause in empty, desultory talk, of simply beating around the bush. The fact is that the time has now come to actually do something, to put aside our apprehensions concerning the difficulties and the obstacles we may face and to put the practical experience we have already accumulated to more extensive use.

Colonel (Retired) V. Chumichev
Honored Builder of the RSFSR

There is something to build on — the "Blok" system

The questions the newspaper has raised in its coverage of this discussion are most timely. Without going over to a fundamentally new approach here it is going to be impossible to make any really substantial improvement in our capital construction effort. This much is clear. Clear, too, is the fact that the prefabricated module method could become one of the primary approaches to the task of more intensively industrializing our construction operations.

This flows logically from the technical evolution of capital construction in this country—from the use of individual industrial components beginning in the 1930's to the all-prefabricated large-panel construction of the post-war years to the standardized industrially produced modular construction we use today.

The high level of standardization represented by the modules of the "Blok" [module] system, which has been developed by military builders, makes it possible to adapt them easily to literally any site conditions, to include those encountered in unprepared, uninhabited regions. There would be no difficulty involved in setting up to fabricate the basic units in the shops or on the grounds of the ordinary reinforced concrete works. Production facilities for the Blok system can easily be set up after the pattern of the house-building combine or in the form of mobile, on-site facilities. Modules can then be fabricated at the construction site itself, which makes it possible to avoid the costly rail transportation which would otherwise be involved.

It should be underlined here that the Blok system has now just about reached the point where we can say it has fairly well proven itself as a system, one distinguished by flexibility and versatility. What we have here are sets of fully factory-ready modules completely installed with the required fixtures and equipment, modular roofs for industrial facilities, bridges and hydraulic works. They can easily be used in combination with components of the conventional roofs up to 24 meters long or as basic components in the design of modular-frame structures of any degree of complexity.

I would also like to express my support for the idea put forward by Colonel General Vertelov of creating within the capital construction sector of the ministry of defense associations of the science-and-construction or design-and-construction variety. This would enable us to establish close links between the

required science and the production end of things and make our scientists and designers more responsible not only for the technical standards of the construction they are proposing, but also for the economic benefit to be derived from it and for the organization, planning and management of production operations. The system by which we procure and then supply materials and equipment for construction operations would be raised to an entirely new plane.

Colonel V. Mayorov, Doctor of Technical Sciences

Colonel (Retired) L. Podolskiy,
Honored Builder of the RSFSR

Cadet Performance Criticized

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 2 Jul 86 p 2

[Text] "They couldn't pass the test" — this was the title under which on April 15 we published a letter from Guards Major V. Isayev in our section headed "A pointed signal." The problem here involved the poor professional training manifested by S. Pleshkun and M. Klimenchuk, two graduates of the higher air defense antiaircraft missile command school in Dnepropetrovsk, during their student training period in one of the antiaircraft missile subunits.

The response the editors received from the school commandant, Lieutenant General Yu. Goncharenko, and the chief of the school's political section, Colonel V. Molotokas, confirmed that investigation had revealed the facts of the case were true as reported. The newspaper's report had been discussed at both a meeting of the school faculty and within the student subunits. Performance results were discussed at a meeting of the school council, at departmental meetings and at a conference of the upper-class students. A thoroughgoing investigation has been undertaken of the preparedness of each graduate to discharge the official duties with which he will be charged. The length of the independent training and study period has been extended by one hour with the objective of improving the quality of the technical training the future officers receive.

But now something has to be added to this official response. As has been explained, upon completing their period of practical student training, cadets Pleshkun and Klimenchuk returned to their school with favorable reports in hand signed by officials of the subunit, on behalf of whom Guards Major Isayev wrote his letter. These reports contained not a single line concerning the deficiencies referred to in the letter to the editors. What is more, both cadets had been awarded Specialist 3d-Class classifications. What are we to make of all this?

We can see from the response we have published above that the school has accepted the criticism which had been levelled at it and has moved promptly to remedy the deficiencies. At the same time, however, one might reasonably ask what are we to make of the fact that the officer who is writing the letter writes one thing to the newspaper but something else altogether in the personal record? It would obviously be more helpful, school officials add, if the reports the students bring back with them from their practical training assignments would contain some objective appraisals of their professional training,

point to specific deficiencies and offer suggestions for improving the training program.

The editors share this opinion — and this confusion. All the more given the fact that, as can be seen from the reports the school has provided on the performance the students turned in during their practical student training period in the battalion, no serious deficiencies in the professional training these future officers had received had been pointed out at any time before. The editors are waiting for some explanation from the commander and the political section of this unit.

Editors Review Mailbag

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 2 Jul 86 p 2

[Text] The editors received 7189 letters from readers during June 1986. Some 400 of these letters have been published in the newspaper. To these we have received 314 responses.

June's mail was a rich mix in terms of both geography and the problems raised by our readers. But one thing all the letters did have in common was that they reflected the authors deep and unflagging interest in the decisions of the June (1986) CPSU Central Committee plenum, the session of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the message from the CPSU Central Committee to the working people of the Soviet Union. The troops of the Soviet armed forces are unanimously declaring their support for the party's domestic and foreign policies and putting forth their utmost in strength and energy to the end of achieving new levels of performance in the discharge of their military duties and of increasing the combat readiness of our troops.

"Captain S. Morozov's company has long since established itself among our best," writes Major A. Blagov. "On the basis of its performance during the first month of the summer training period, it has today once again placed first in competition. During their recent field exercises the troops of this organization demonstrated new levels of mastery of basic combat skills."

Other letters have come in which echo this. These readers, too, are reporting that the first month of the summer training period has seen a great upsurge of political and professional enthusiasm throughout the armed forces generated by the decisions of the party. Among our forces both on land and at sea the fire of socialist competition is burning brighter and hotter. Participants in this competition are filled with the desire to add a worthy contribution to the effort to carry through the training plans, taking a personal interest in everything that goes on within their subunit and evaluating their own performance and conduct from the point of view of organization and efficiency. So many of them who write in to the newspaper are concerned not only about the early performance results coming in from training, but also about the need to take a critical look at what has been accomplished. They rightly insist that we can no longer tolerate short cuts, oversimplification, the purely formalistic attitude toward the organization of the training program or any neglect of the moral and educational aspects of socialist competition. Warrant Officer N.

Makhnakov, for example, worries that his subunit is not going to be able to fulfill its competition obligations. He writes as follows: "Take our planning for personnel training. A month has already gone by now, and there still aren't any plans in place. Because of some serious miscalculations the training activities in the training center had to be broken off. And then on another occasion, instead of the training we had planned, the platoon had to be put on fatigue detail."

This writer was not alone in expressing these concerns. Lieutenant B. Gladyshev writes concerning the inadequate publicity he sees given socialist competition. Over the course of an entire month the company's performance results were figured up only once, and then only hurriedly because other things, more important things, didn't allow it. But people are always wanting to know what kind of a rating their performance is getting.

Another subject, no less important, which has readers concerned is the need to tighten military discipline and insure closer adherence to proper procedures in the subunits which have fallen off the pace in this respect. They say in their letters that they are at a loss to explain why it is that right next to an "outstanding"-rated unit, a well-organized outfit in which a warm, harmonious atmosphere prevails, you can find a company or a platoon in which there seems to be no end to disruptions of the daily routine, where some of the older personnel show no respect for the younger troops. And they put their fingers on some reasons for the negative phenomena to be found in these organizations.

"In my battalion there is a young communist officer by the name of D. Sviridov," writes Captain I. Nikolenko. "The party organization had reviewed his case not long ago and imposed a severe punishment for rudeness to subordinates and drinking to excess. But had we really gotten to the bottom of things and found out what it was in fact that accounted for his misconduct? I have given this some thought and can now see that we haven't, that there's got to be more to this. How are we to account for the fact that a man entrusted with an important responsibility, the responsibility for training soldiers, shows no respect for them and avoids any close contact with his subordinates? Why is it that things seem always to degenerate into screaming rages where we would want to see the attentiveness and tact expected of a commander? And we would really like to know what the man does in his spare time, what does he do with his off-duty time? What kind of atmosphere reigns in his living quarters? When was the last time the commander and political officer stopped by? Many questions come to mind here, and unfortunately the discussion at the party meeting left a good number of them unanswered. There ought to be some clear indication that discussion of the human factor is going to have its concrete results in performance in implementation of the training program."

Along with many other readers, the author of this letter rightly believes that without this kind of probing, thoroughgoing analysis we are not going to be able to accomplish a single task in our training program. Worthy of note here is the fact that the editors' mailbag is turning up letters in increasing numbers which touch on questions of major social importance, letters which reflect the spirit of the times.

Energy-Saving Measures Introduced

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 7 Jul 86 p 2

[Text] "A Normal Day" — this was the title under which on February 12 and 13 we published correspondence from Colonel A. Yurkin, who had written the editors outlining new ways to achieve economies in the Lenin Komsomol Guards Motorized Rifle Training Regiment.

The editors then received a letter from Guards Major A. Belousov. He reports that the newspaper's reporting was discussed with all groups of military personnel within the regiment and the questions raised during these meetings were then studied at an official conference and a meeting of the party committee. Conclusions arrived at during these discussions have now been translated into practical measures.

The regiment has introduced a system of energy passports, data sheets, for all buildings and individual facilities and rooms. Twenty-four-hour personnel have been issued guidelines and instructions booklets outlining procedures for monitoring electricity consumption. A number of steps have been taken to intensify the simulator component of the training program. A competition has been launched among the subunits with the objective of improving conduct, particularly during mess.

These measures have begun to yield some encouraging results. During one recent month, for example, economies in fuel and lubricants reached 4 per cent, in fuel 3 per cent and electricity 5 per cent, while breakage of dishes and utensils in the mess hall was cut almost in half.

8963

CSO: 1801/224

GROUND FORCES

GSFG: HIGH EXPENSE, LOW RESULTS OF TANK FIRE TRAINING

Moscow KRSNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Jul 86 p 1

[Article by Lt Col S. Ivanov, Northern Group of Forces: "Unjustified Expenditures"]

[Text] The tank company commanded by Captain I. Kuznetsov was to go through its next exercise in the fire training that night. The designated hour had long since passed and dusk had closed in over the range, but the tankmen had still not begun firing. Having arrived late at the range, they were now hastily rectifying inadequacies in the preparation of the equipment and armament.

It was 2 hours past the time indicated in the schedule when the first crews approached the firing line. The flashes from the rounds sparkled in the night. They waited in vain at the section command post for information on target destruction, however. Yes, the electronic equipment was operating normally. The firing was not accurate.

Logic should have told them to stop the firing, thoroughly determine the causes of the failure and do everything possible to see that the deficiencies were not repeated on the next runs. Nothing of the kind was done, however. The firing continued even though the results continued to be poor. One had the impression that the instructor was concerned not with the quality of his subordinates' fire training but with using up the ammunition as rapidly as possible.

The exercise ended. The company returned to its area. Naturally, both the commander and his subordinates were dissatisfied with the results. They had not succeeded in taking a perceptible step toward the level of combat perfection set in the competition. And this was discussed with bitterness during the summation of the exercise. There was another aspect of the failure, however, an economic one. Unfortunately, no one even mentioned it, however, although there is a point in the tankmen's commitments which orients them to struggle to make thrifty use of the time and materiel. Simple calculations showed how much the tankmen's unsuccessful trip to the range had cost.

One is alarmed not just by the wastefulness itself but also by the attitude toward it. There is still time before the training year ends, of course, for the tankmen to pull themselves up in the fire training. And they will undoubtedly do so. At what cost will the end result be achieved, however? One cannot think calmly about this, when one sees such outings (they can be called nothing else) to the range.

Conservation was named as one of the main objectives of socialist competition in the CPSU Central Committee's Appeal to Workers of the Soviet Union. This applies also to competition in the army, of course. We have every opportunity to achieve good results in the combat training with the smallest possible expenditure of time and means. Classes and drills are planned, and the training materials and equipment base is being improved with the economic aspect of the combat training in mind. And those commanders are doing the right thing, who attempt to develop the maximum number of the skills essential in combat in their subordinates before leaving for the field, using trainers and other training equipment for this purpose.

As we can see, however, there are commanders who reason in approximately this manner: We can learn everything when we go to the field. It was revealed that Captain Kuznetsov, specifically, had taken the company to the range without having properly covered the subject in tank gunnery drills. And we know that it is precisely in the TST [tank gunnery drills] where the tankmen's basic firing skills are developed.

There are officers in the regiment, however, who know how to achieve good results while making thrifty use of the materiel. Their know-how deserves most careful attention. I have had occasion to discuss this with company and battalion commanders and with regimental staff officers. All of them self-critically assess the results of their work in this area. It is time to move from self-criticism to specific economic work, however.

11499

CSO: 1801/232

AIR/AIR DEFENSE FORCES

DISCUSSION OF TRAINING IN SAM BATTERY

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Jul 86 p 1

[Report by Maj A. Dokuchayev, KRASNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent, Red Banner Far East Military District: "Was There a Step Forward?"]

[Text] Captain V. Turkov, commander of the SAM battery, carefully studied the plan for the forthcoming training exercise, submitted by Captain G. Nasonov, his deputy. Raids by single and group targets, use of the interference simulator, a complex tactical background, competition by task and norm... Everything seemed to have been thought out and considered.

"Just a few more low-flying targets," the battery commander said. "Remember what trouble they caused us during the inspection."

Captain Nasonov made the changes, and the plan was then reported to the unit commander. The latter made no comments. That was in the evening. The next morning, however, when the missilemen had taken up their stations, the unit commander issued the order to Captain Turkov:

"Conduct the training exercise... right here."

The pencil in the commander's hand touched a spot on the map.

Captain Turkov wanted to say that he had not planned for a march that day, but the commander, as though reading his thoughts, concluded:

"It doesn't matter. You can test both yourself and your men."

Discussing the unexpected problem, Turkov and Nasonov arrived at the opinion that there really was not much benefit from all those single and group raids or the interference when the commanders and the crew members had long since grown accustomed to the terrain and could get their bearings there with their eyes closed, figuratively speaking. After all, in a real combat situation it will be necessary to carry out missions under unfamiliar circumstances in which the station's visibility will be different, and it will be necessary to alter the tactics for dealing with the targets. Was the battery prepared for this?

The march involved considerable anxiety. Movement was held up not only by the inclines, descents and difficult taiga debris. One could also sense that skills

in getting their bearings on the terrain had dulled with the passage of time. They barely made it within the time allocated for the march.

After that everything should have gone according to plan. The unaccustomed outline of local features appeared on the screen, however, and the operators became flustered. They did not get a feel for things and enter into the normal rhythm of combat training work immediately. This is what it means to become accustomed to the same training area!

The battery coped with its training mission in general. Immediately afterward, Captain Turkov and his deputies began a detailed analysis of the exercise. They gave careful attention to the errors. These were compared with those committed during the winter training. As a matter of fact, although the battery personnel had accepted a commitment to bring their subunit up to the excellent level during the winter training period, they had not succeeded. In the final spring exercises certain crews demonstrated poor skills in working with low-flying targets.

The proper conclusions were derived from that lesson. The training materials and equipment base was improved. The battery commander became more demanding of the officers with respect to their preparations for classes with a view to ending once and for all the removal of personnel from the training, the formalism and simplifications in it. Despite this, the present training session brought out new failures.

The unit commander made a principled analysis of the battery personnel's performance. While noting certain changes for the better, he advised that the trend be developed in accordance with the demands of the times. It is not enough today, for example, to include a jamming simulator in the drill and then assume that this has eliminated indulgences and simplifications in the training. Making the maximum effort--and the commander stressed the fact that this is the kind of service toward which each of us must be oriented today--demands great combat intensity.

The regimental commander thoroughly analysed the exercise. Among other things, he pointed out that interference on the radar screen had been weak at the beginning of the "enemy's" massed raid. Is this how it would be in an actual combat situation? The situation in the exercises should be made more difficult. The combat training and the socialist competition should be organized in such a way that every class is a perceptible step forward in the combat training of the fightingmen.

There was a reason why the regimental commander paid such attention to the generally ordinary exercise. The regimental staff is paying special attention to those subunits which did not fulfill their commitments during the winter training period. Strict demandingness is being combined with specific, practical assistance on the spot.

11499

CSO: 1801/232

AIR/AIR DEFENSE FORCES

COL GEN RESHETNIKOV DISCUSSES CAREER IN AIR FLEET DAY ARTICLE

Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 17 Aug 86 p 1

[Colonel General of Aviation V. V. Reshetnikov, Hero of the Soviet Union, deputy commander-in-chief of the Air Force, answers questions of KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA correspondent in article entitled: "Climb"]

[Text] Question. We are talking about aviation and, consequently, about romance.

Answer. I think that the need to fly is found in each of us, although it does not become the only calling for each. And without this it is better not to begin.

Flying gives man great joy. Even during the war years, when dawn found us still behind the front line and with every ray of the sun our aircraft was ever more clearly and dangerously illuminated against the background of the enemy sky, even then we could not help but love the uncommon beauty of the beginning of a new morning. In order to be more difficult to be hit and intercepted by fighters, we switched to low level flight. Under the wing the ground glistened and there wafted the smell of the morning grasses. I also remember those flights when right at dawn we flew in lone aircraft on various routes to new operational airfields, hugging the tops of the pine trees, flying along the edge of forests and the bends of rivers just over the water, so that the banks flew by overhead, steep and green.

Question. But, Vasilii Vasilyevich, that was how it was in the past. Now aviation has changed. Speed, altitude, acceleration.

Answer. The Air Force has changed, this is indisputable. Ranges have become intercontinental, speeds supersonic and weapons high-precision, with tremendous destructive force. Today planes rush along even at three times the speed of sound. This is more than a kilometer per second.

Question. This is somewhere high, high above the clouds.

Answer. Of course.

Question. This means that the landscapes and earthly beauties are no longer especially scenic. No longer does the pilot tip his wings to his own home. He does not fly over the river, tracing its sharp turns. Does not the romance disappear with all this?

Answer. Well, no. Aviation has not lost its romance. Perhaps it has merely changed in some respect, having absorbed the rhythms and colorations of a new time. Say that somewhere in the starry blackness of the stratosphere (there, by the way, the stars shine even in the day), targets headed your way are barring the way. This is not merely difficult work. There is little cold calculation here. In it unavoidably is the burning of your heart, almost passion, it is the explosion of emotions, held in check by your will. You must accomplish your mission, no matter what, with no back-ups, and return to earth the victor. To experience this is an incomparable feeling. Is it not romantic?! It is true that your "enemy" is also not a simpleton, and he is also striving to do exactly the same thing. All the more honor to the victor. And if, following a flight of many hours behind the wheel of a heavy missile carrier, the crew must return to its home shores on the last drops of fuel and somewhere there, above the ocean, in order to reach the nearest air fields, it must be refueled, this is like a dispute with fate itself. And even an experienced master of in-flight refueling always experiences a happy state of difficulty overcome, and danger as well, and a flow of strength and confidence in himself. It is a strong and elevated feeling, not very frequently encountered on land. In it is something of the heroic spirit, and something artistic and creative.

Question. The pilot is creative?

Answer. And why not? In any profession one must strive to be creative. All the more so in flying. In the final analysis tactics of waging combat operations are not an applied science for a military pilot, but an inexhaustible field for his continuous creativity, even improvisation. Owing to their creative attitude toward their work, all aviation units continuously and noticeably improve their combat capabilities year after year.

Question. And how did the skies enter your destiny?

Answer. It happened in 1936. I was then studying in a workers' high school in Dnepropetrovsk. And some stray thoughts overtook me, about distant expanses, mountain sunrises, the arctic. Suddenly I learned that the komsomol was selecting people for aviation. I could think of nothing else. Just to fly! Then there was the medical commission, testing, the Voroshilovgrad School for Pilots. Before I knew it at age 19 I was wearing the light blue tabs.

Question. The war found Vasiliy Vasilyevich an instructor pilot. He retrained flight personnel on new military equipment. From the first day he asked to be sent to the front, wrote report after report. "No," they answered. "You are needed more here."

Answer. In fall 1941 a captain arrived to select night pilots for the newly organized 751st Long Range Air Regiment. And he took me with him. Only then

did I understand with whom I would have to fly: all were aces, the most experienced pilots, captains and senior lieutenants. I was a junior lieutenant. The regiment commander was Major Vasiliy Gavrilovich Tikhonov, a Hero of the Soviet Union. In August he was among the first to bomb Berlin. The commander saved his "aces" for night operations. But the regiment also had daytime missions. This was my "line of work." The targets changed: We bombed an airfield in the area of Smolensk, where the fascist buzzards flying against Moscow were based; the Vyazma railroad junction, large concentrations of troops and equipment at Rzhev.

The flights were difficult; there were always encounters. After two flights, for the third, as if on schedule, after we landed I taxied immediately to the shop to patch the holes on the aircraft. Soon the commander completely trusted me and transferred me to night flights.

Now the fascist fighters really pressed us. And it was more difficult for the pilots to conduct aimed fire, if the target was not illuminated by searchlights. But I soon learned to break away from two or three searchlights.

Question. At my request the general brought photographs of the war years. Simple, young faces, smiling. Like brothers. All were in flying suits, right at the aircraft. The general looked at one photograph for an especially long period of time and sighed heavily:

Answer. Here is my squadron. Almost none survived. Captain Pavel Petrovich Radchuk, Major Vsevolod Grigoryevich Chernichenko, my pre-war squadron commander Captain Sergey Pavlovich Kazmin, Tarelkin Kolya, Dedushkin...all were senior to me, both in age and rank. You know, more than 40 years have passed, and for me it is as if they are still alive. I remember with undiminishing sorrow. Such people the war took away!

Question. And were you knocked down, Vasiliy Vasilyevich?

Answer. I did not avoid it. It is unlikely that in such a fierce war more than 300 combat flights would pass without serious losses. The first time was in February 1942. We had bombed an airfield at Orsha. The strike was a good one. Immediately flames shot up. And when we got away from the anti-aircraft fire we grappled with a Messerschmitt. We shot it down. But it also got us. Navigator Vasya Zemskov was seriously wounded. There were bullet holes in the wings and the left motor was damaged. The RPMs declined. The right motor pulled well, but at the end it also jammed. The instrument panel was destroyed. To top it all off the trimmer, which takes the loads from the wheel, turned out to be broken. And we were 350 km from the front line. An hour and a half dragged by. My strength was not sufficient, the wheel was propped up by my knees. When we crossed the front line our altitude was already 600 meters. I gave the order for the gunner and radio man to abandon the aircraft. I set the aircraft down without extending the landing gear, by touch (it was night) in snow-drifts in a forest clearing.

Then, also in 1942 I had to get out of territory occupied by the Germans on one side in the area north of Velikiye Luki. Then navigator Aleksey Vasilyev

perished. Radio-operator gunner Nezhentsev was captured. After a month I got away, returned to my unit and continued to fly until the end of the war. The third time was already 1943. We let a "Messer" slip by at night. Out of the whole crew only I was left. And Ivan Plakitskiy, Sasha Mitrofanov...

Question. They were surprising young. Reshetnikov ended the war as a lieutenant colonel, a Hero of the Soviet Union, and was only 25. They loved life, dearly loved flying, but the homeland was first for them.

Vasilii Vasilyevich, could a wartime pilot fly a modern airplane?

Answer. With continuous and constant training. I myself flew. I was already a colonel general and flew. And I flew at minimum altitude -- right on the deck -- such flights are being developed even now in all branches of aviation. But if, of course, a wartime pilot is merely carried away mentally, even the most experienced pilot, in these days he will not be able to fly. Electronics and automated systems are unknown and unfamiliar to him. It is not for nothing that today all Air Force pilots and navigators are military engineers. But, you know, today's pilot will not be able to sit at the wheel of a wartime aircraft either. Those aircraft had their own character, their special characteristics.

Aviation is unending training and continuous work on one's self. A new recruitment, I would say selection, of young men for flight schools has taken place. It is unfortunate if someone decided simply to try it out. For this he may pay heavily. But if you are sure that this is your sacred dream, the only way of existence for you, then give of your labor, your mind, your feelings and your conscience. To fly is not so much to ask, for the sake of your happiness.

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NAVAL FORCES

SERVICE ON NORTHERN FLEET SUBMARINES DESCRIBED

Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Jul 86 p 3

[Article under the rubric "Life in the Soviet Armed Forces" by Capt 1st Rank, Reserves, G. Savichev, Red Banner Northern Fleet: "Stars in the Periscope"]

[Text] Many years ago my work brought me to the north. Grey, rocky shores blanketed in snow, a niggardly sun and very cold water... At that time, no one even thought of rest. The Northern Fleet was mastering new combat equipment. And this, of course, was the main concern.

At that very time, Viktor Aleksandrovich Kuzmin was serving as the political officer on a nuclear submarine commanded by Captain 3d Rank R. Erlikh--one of the veterans of the submarine forces. The fame about the exploits of his crew had already spread throughout the fleet: the ship was the first to win the status of outstanding. The services of the political officer had something to do with this: Kuzmin was known in the fleet and respected.

I remember a snowy, cold day, moorings powdered with snow and a gigantic submarine nodding next to the pier. From the side, the nuclear submarine resembled the legendary "Nautilus," which was born in the imagination of Jules Verne. But how amazed the writer would most likely be, if he could see the combat vessel. It was mightier and more maneuverable than its fabled brother. At that time, nuclear-powered vessels had already become symbols of perfection. They held all the achievements of cybernetics, electronics, nuclear physics and hydroacoustics... Serving on them was an honor that fell to the very best. Why hide it: I envied Kuzmin. And he seemed to have guessed my thoughts.

"Believe me: it even takes your breath away! What force! Speed, autonomy and unlimited range of navigation... This is today's fleet! And imagine on what kinds of ships our sons will serve? It is even difficult to imagine how mighty our fleet will become in 20 or 25 years..."

How quickly those years went by. Much has changed in the fleet. The veterans have retired. And I have not seen Kuzmin for a long time. I knew that he had settled in Kiev: he became a university instructor. And suddenly the telephone rang... "I'm passing through Moscow. If you would like to, we can get together."

And in an hour we were drinking boiling hot navy tea and reminiscing about our distant youth: names of commanders and colleagues and details about our first voyages under the ice. Now nuclear-powered submarines plough all oceans, and no one is surprised. Ordinary work! Back then each departure was an event.

My longtime friend and I recalled a lot of things on that quiet Moscow evening. Now and then, the speeding wheels of a car could be seen through the window, the sound of heels could be heard, then quiet. And before our eyes--an immense ocean.

Let us just take the first time we put out to sea on our very first nuclear-powered vessel. Hero of the Soviet Union Rear Admiral Leonid Gavrilovich Osipenko recounted:

"I remember: the commander-in-chief arrived with the admirals. A chairman of a state commission, scientists and designers were with them... They were walking off the tugboat mooring. 'Shall we get underway?' I asked the commander in chief. 'All right!' he replied. I turned the handle of the teleprinter, and the nuclear-powered vessel slipped along the smooth water. We were accustomed to the sound of diesels, but here there is quiet. Once under water, the speed increased. Everyone understood: we were present at the birth of a new epoch..."

The first Soviet nuclear submarine was called the "Leninskiy Komsomol." After Osipenko, its crew was headed by Lev Mikhaylovich Zhiltsov. Moving a great distance under eternal, so-called packed ice, the "Leninskiy Komsomol" was the first to reach the North Pole. Another nuclear-powered vessel under the command of Captain 2d Rank Yu. Sysoyev not only reached the pole, but it also surfaced in the middle of ice fields at the very same spot where all of the meridians of the planet come together at one point. Finally, there was the round-the-world underwater voyage of a detachment of Soviet nuclear-powered vessels under the command of Rear Admiral A. Sorokin. Our ships had then passed through all the climate zones of the earth, had crossed several oceans and seas, and had made their way through regions that were not equipped in a navigational sense. In those days this voyage was called a heroic feat... Victor Aleksandrovich Kuzmin and I recalled many exciting episodes that evening.

"And how is your little son?" I could not help asking. "If my memory does not fail me, he was studying at the Higher Military Naval School. It seems he was planning to become a submariner..."

Kuzmin laughed.

"Little son? But Aleksandr has been a captain 2d rank for a long time. He commands a nuclear missile submarine. As you see, service in the navy has become a family tradition. My younger son, Sergey, is also following in my footsteps..."

At that very time, Capt 2d Rank Kuzmin was getting ready for an ocean cruise. As is normal, Aleksandr Viktorovich decided to go through the ship before the start of the cruise. And it is not only that he wanted to assure himself of the readiness of equipment and combat weapons. A commander has to look into the eyes of each of his subordinates and show that he trusts them.

To go from end to end in a modern nuclear-powered vessel is not the easiest of tasks. To say that this is a gigantic ship, then, does not say everything. This is a super giant. It is separated by steel bulkheads into separate sections: reactor, missile, turbine... Only a trained person has the strength to look through all of this.

The ship that Kuzmin commands is loaded with the newest equipment and formidable weapons. It can, without rising to the surface, reach any point of the world's oceans. It can deliver a shattering strike on an enemy located many thousands of miles from the ship. The commander can "peek" into each compartment: all he has to do is press the right button and he can see any one of his subordinates on a television screen. You can talk as much as your heart desires! But Kuzmin holds to another rule. Even the smartest equipment cannot replace person-to-person contacts.

This time the submariners had to complete a combat training task, on whose success much depended. Kuzmin was to search for and destroy a large convoy in the ocean expanse after overcoming the counteraction of "enemy" antisubmarine forces...

In the dead of night, having cast off, the nuclear submarine left the mooring. There was an impenetrable darkness. At times, the wind, rising over the cliffs, tossed the clouds about and then the stars poured out, as if from a dipper. In their bright twinkling, the narrow passageways in the granite walls became visible, along which the massive hulk of a nuclear-powered vessel slid quietly. In the end, the shore broke through the darkness. After looking at his watch, Kuzmin asked the navigator for the coordinates.

"Submerge quickly!"

And as it is supposed to be, the commander was the last to leave the bridge. The massive hatchway closed with a clang. Parting the ocean with its huge body, the nuclear-powered vessel submerged. And the cruise days dragged on, where, essentially, standing watch served as a criterion of time. And the submariners can find themselves in the ocean not one day, and not two, but tens of days, and sometimes even months.

Only the commander, I think, did not confine himself to the differentiation in watches. He was always at the main post. Of course, he is not prohibited from being in his own comfortable cabin, where he can receive any information on the internal and external situation. The equipment is omnipotent. But Aleksandr Viktorovich prefers the main post. Here, with people, it is more pleasant and reassuring.

As soon as the "enemy" antisubmarine ship was detected, the crew sensed immediately that the time of decisive tests had arrived. The commander maneuvered skilfully, and the antisubmariners slipped past. He was also not detected by other ships and aircraft which had the task of blocking the path of the submariners. Having won the duel, the submarine launched its missiles. They took off for a distant target and destroyed it with the first strike.

But we learned about all of this later on. As the senior Kuzmin telephoned and reported: the launches conducted by my son were considered to be the best in the fleet.

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NAVAL FORCES

NAVOYTSEV INTERVIEW ON SOVIET NAVY DAY

Moscow SOVETSKIY PATRIOT in Russian 27 Jul 86 p 1

[Interview with Naval Adm Petr Nikolayevich Navoytsev, first deputy chief of naval headquarters, by Capt 2nd Rank D. Ilyuk; date and place not specified; first two paragraphs are SOVETSKIY PATRIOT introduction]

[Text] On 27 July, our country solemnly celebrates Soviet Navy Day. The Soviet people traditionally honor military sailors, naval veterans, and the workers of the shipbuilding and defense industry who build warships and produce up-to-date equipment.

We asked Naval Adm Petr Nikolayevich Navoytsev, first deputy chief of naval headquarters, to tell about today's day for our navy.

[Question] Comrade admiral! As everyone knows, Navy Day has been celebrated since 1939. What is significant about this year's holiday for military sailors?

[Answer] Primarily in that it is being observed in an atmosphere of great political and labor enthusiasm evoked by the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress and the June (1986) CPSU Central Committee Plenum. The military sailors enthusiastically support the innovative undertakings of the party in all areas of the life of Soviet society and see it as their duty to defend dependably the peaceful and creative labor of the Soviet people in unity with the warriors of other branches of the armed services.

The summer military training of the warriors is now in full swing. The efforts of naval personnel are aimed at the complete and high-quality fulfillment of the intensive programs for military and political training and high socialist obligations. The motto of the competition of military sailors is "We Will Carry Out the Decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress and Reliably Defend the Achievements of Socialism."

The initiator of today's competition is the crew of a nuclear missile submarine commanded by Capt 1st Rank V. Ivanov. This crew is leading the way for the others; 59 percent of its members are outstanding graduates of military and political training and 90 percent are class specialists and

masters of military science. Eighty percent of the military posts and units [chasti] are outstanding.

The USSR Navy Day is being celebrated with good results by the crews of the rocket cruisers "Slava" and "Groznyy," the aircraft-carrying cruiser "Novorossiysk," the large antisubmarine ship "Krasnyy Krym" of the guard, the personnel of the aviation unit where the officer D. Vyduykin serves, and others.

Navy communists are in the vanguard of the struggle for high indicators of the labor of arms. Party organizations are operating in the thick of the masses of service personnel and are exercising permanent influence on all aspects of the life and work of personnel. Just as in production collectives, they live in an atmosphere of the creative search for and renewal of the forms and methods of work.

Despite the usual monotony of training, it can be said that many military sailors are heroes of our day. Just recently, the officers A. Olkhovnikov, Yu. Churilov and V. Protopopov have been awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. Thousands of soldiers have been awarded orders and medals.

[Question] The patronage of the Komsomol played an important role in the history of the development of the USSR Navy. In 1939, comrade admiral, you yourself answered the call of the Komsomol to enter the advanced naval college and later took part in battles against the German-fascist invaders and Japanese militarists. Tell us about the nature of this Komsomol patronage of the navy

[Answer] It continues to be militant and fruitful. The military sailors have close ties with the Komsomol organizations of all union republics and 57 krays and oblasts in the country. Active assistance is being provided by the Komsomol organizations of Kazakhstan, Belorussia, Latvia, Khabarovsk Kray, Kaliningrad, Krymsk and Gorkiy oblasts, the city of Leningrad, Sokolnicheskiy and Timiryazevskiy rayons of Moscow, and others.

As in the distant 1920's and 1930's, many young men go to serve on the ships and in navy units on Komsomol travel orders and consider it an honor to be assigned to a ship with a Komsomol name. Every fleet has such ships. It is always a holiday for the sailors when their sponsors come to visit. They come to see how their emissaries and the other sailors are performing their military duties, to speak of their own labor successes, to exchange experiences in Komsomol work, and to give the advanced collectives and best warriors awards--diplomas, prizes, and challenge pennants and banners. Must I say how that inspires the warriors?

Delegations of military sailors also visit their sponsors frequently. Navy warriors participate in the organization of the patriotic and mass defensive work with preconscript and conscript-age youth--school children and students of the Agricultural Vocational and Technical School. Our military sailors sponsor 35 DOSAAF schools, clubs for young sailors, and Pioneer flotillas and are consultants for the military sports games "Orlenok," "Zarnitsa," and "Rubezh."

All of the navy schools have established military-patriotic associations for youth, in which secondary school students receive basic knowledge on naval operations.

When military sailors are released to the reserve on travel orders of naval Komsomol organizations, they are sent to key Komsomol construction projects in the country.

[Question] You just said that the military sailors sponsor DOSAAF schools. It is also known that one third of the conscripts going to the army or navy receive a military specialty there. Tell us, please, about the service of the pupils of the defense society.

[Answer] The DOSAAF is a reliable helper and reserve of the army and navy. As a rule, its pupils learn the system rapidly, competently operate military equipment, and successfully study at advanced naval schools.

The navy's Military Council established a challenge Red Banner for the best training of specialists for the armed forces. For the results of the last academic year, it was given to the Moscow Model Naval School of the DOSAAF.

The graduates of other schools are characterized by a high level of training. Anticipating this interview, I took special interest in the service of DOSAAF pupils. And it was pleasant to hear some favorable comments. Especially indicative, in my opinion, are the achievements of the Black Sea petty officers 1st class M. Gulyavyy and A. Sotnikov and Petty Officer 2nd class B. Bagriy. The first of them was graduated from the Ilichevsk school of the DOSAAF prior to being called to the navy, the second from the Voronezh school, and the third from the Ternopol school. They acquired various specialties there and are serving on various ships. But all three are outstanding graduates of military and political training, first-class specialists, and progressive petty officers. For outstanding successes in the labor of arms, M. Gulyavyy and A. Sotnikov were awarded the Ushakov Medal and B. Bagriy was awarded the Nakhimov Medal. There are many similar examples.

[Question] Comrade admiral! Despite the holiday, today many sailors are on long cruises doing duty on the high seas. What could you say about the situation in the sea and ocean theaters?

[Answer] It is just as tense as it is in the world as a whole. It is characterized by the massed presence of the naval forces of NATO countries in different regions of the world oceans, especially the forces of the United States. A large part of the American missile-carrying submarines are continually on military patrol in regions from where it is possible to deliver nuclear strikes against targets located in the heart of the territory of the USSR.

In the United States, they think that a strong navy is the most appropriate means to achieve global foreign-policy objectives. The intensive increase in naval armaments clearly indicates the intention of the United States to dominate in the world oceans.

To justify in some way the arms race on the seas, American politicians and Western propaganda are fabricating stories about the mythical "Soviet naval threat," which is how they interpret any step by our country to strengthen and develop its navy. But the peoples of the world have learned to distinguish between lies and truth and know that the Soviet Union is consistently against the militarization of the oceanic expanses.

Our navy is in the world oceans to ensure the security of our homeland and other countries of socialism, to restrain the military adventures of imperialism, and to help preserve the peace. Soviet military sailors are proud of this honorable mission.

In carrying out a consistent policy of peace, our country cannot and will not allow the strategic superiority of the forces of imperialism.

[Question] Tell us, please, about the military potential of the navy. What does it represent today?

[Answer] Soviet military sailors have all that they need to perform their missions in defense of their homeland. At their disposal is an adequate number of nuclear submarines and up-to-date surface ships, naval aircraft for different purposes, and rockets. The naval infantry is equipped with excellent combat equipment. The coastal rocket and artillery units of the navy have great possibilities for the successful waging of combat operations.

Experienced commanders and political workers train and educate warriors. The high level of nonspecialized, ideological and special training of personnel is a notable characteristic of the contemporary navy.

Our sailors are fervent patriots of their socialist homeland and convinced internationalists. Armed with Marxist-Leninist ideology and selflessly devoted to the party and the people, they are continuing remarkable naval traditions with honor and fulfilling their military duty in defense of the sea boundaries of the fatherland in a worthy manner.

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NAVAL FORCES

KUZNETSOV INTERVIEW ON NAVAL AVIATION

Moscow NEDELYA in Russian No 33 (1377), 11-17 Aug 86 p 19

[Interview with Hero of the Soviet Union Georgiy Andreyevich Kuznetsov, commander of naval aviation, by Oleg Povetkin; date and place not specified]

[Text] [Question] Georgiy Andreyevich, how did Soviet naval aviation begin?

[Answer] In August 1919, when a squadron of English ships was approaching Arkhangelsk, V.I. Lenin turned to E.M. Sklyanskiy, member of the country's Supreme Military Council: the north is being threatened with an intervention. Is there any way to send aircraft? A few days later, a detachment of hydroplanes of the Baltic Fleet was moved to Severnaya Dvina and engaged the enemy--the first battle of Soviet naval aviators with an external enemy. But the official date of the beginning of naval aviation is considered to be 27 April 1918, when a special air brigade was organized under the Baltic Air Division. During the years of the civil war, this brigade fought on the Volga, Kama and Severnaya Dvina rivers and on the Baltic, Black, Caspian and Azov seas. As you see, that covers quite a lot of geography. The first aircraft-carrying ship, , as we say, was an ordinary barge called the "Kommuna." It became part of the Volga Military Flotilla and took on deck six hydroplanes and three wheeled fighter aircraft. To be sure, they only traveled by water and continued to take off from land.

[Question] It turns out that even then aviation did not just fly but also sailed. Many, I know, think that this took place somewhat later.

[Answer] No, our type of forces has a much longer history and older traditions than is sometimes thought. Naval Lt S.F. Dorzhinskiy was a pioneer in our work and the Russian ace in two elements--the sky and the water. The young and courageous person of boundless energy was a patriot of the ocean of air and truly creative soul. He immediately understood what prospects were opening up for the wing over the sea and insisted that they send him to France to study at the "Antoinette" school, which he finished in 1910. This far-sighted person had the good fortune to take off from the smooth surface of the water sooner than the rest. His name is now history.

After the October Revolution, the aircraft designers D.P. Grigorovich and A.N. Tupolev worked on the creation of new types of hydroplanes. The amphibious

aircraft SH-2 of V.B. Shavrov took part in the "Chelyuskina" ice campaigns. The renowned M. Babushkin and the flight mechanic G. Volovin flew in it. At the end of the 1930's, the so-called SPL--special aircraft for submarines--designed by I. Chetveryakovi appeared and later the KOR-1 and KOR-2 of the designer G. Beriye, who made a tremendous contribution to the development of naval aviation, which subsequently trained 260 Heroes of the Soviet Union. By the way, it was precisely our aircraft that made the first bombing strikes against Berlin in August 1941. The fascist command was so stunned by the raid that it could not explain what had happened. And when Hitler's top-ranking warriors finally realized what had actually occurred, they hurriedly declared to the world that those were English aircraft and that the Russians simply had no such air force. At the same time, they reported that those doing the bombing had suffered losses. Meanwhile, every last one of our aircraft returned home. A complete success!

By the way, it was precisely the naval aviation pilot Ye. Ryzhov who was the first to make a frontal attack from the air and 39 brave aerial warriors repeated his feat. Everyone knows the names of the flyers-seamen and twice Heroes of the Soviet Union V. Safonov, A. Mazurenko, V. Rakov, N. Stepanyan and N. Chelnokov. A. Lyapidevskiy and Yu. Gagarin also served in naval aviation.

[Question] If you can, would you tell a few words about the latest achievements of the warriors of two elements, as the naval aviators are often called?

[Answer] The naval aviation of the USSR has reached new horizons in recent years. We are seeing up-to-date multimission aircraft and powerful aircraft with vertical takeoff and landing. Supersonic missile-carrying aircraft capable of successfully defending any facilities at any point on the world oceans are based on first-class aircraft carriers. This technology has been entrusted to bold and resolute people whose labor of arms is highly valued by the party and government. Among them are quite a few who have been awarded the title "Honored Military Pilot of the USSR" or "Honored Military Navigator of the USSR."

[Question] What educational institutions are training personnel for you?

[Answer] The demands on naval personnel are increasing from year to year. This obligates one to improve the training continuously. Most of the officers coming to us have completed higher air force schools. Besides the nonspecialized disciplines, they study flight theory (aerodynamics), aerial navigation, aviation meteorology.... Of course, all of them have flown quite a lot. The schools inculcate the young aviators with such qualities as profound ideological conviction, loyalty to the ideals of communism, discipline, high professionalism, courage, self-control.... In short, all of those character traits that are also a powerful weapon of the warrior defending his socialist fatherland.

[Question] Georgiy Andreyevich, the labor of arms produces heroes in a time of peace as well. I know that you have such heroes.

[Answer] It is too bad that there is not enough newspaper space to tell about all of the courageous soldiers of peacetime. We all remember Cpt Viktor Kubrakov. His crew was performing a routine training assignment when a breakdown occurred. The crew had only a few seconds in which to make a decision. It was a very difficult decision, because under the wing was not the sea but land, a large settlement. Kubrakov catapulted all of the others in the cockpit and he himself guided the aircraft to a safe place, where he shared the fate of his aircraft.

The title of Hero of the Soviet Union was recently awarded to Col Yuriy Ivanovich Churilov for courage shown in mastering complex aviation equipment. Yuriy Ivanovich was a delegate to the 27th CPSU Congress.

[Question] Everyone knows that skillful flying is above all accurate calculations and the irreproachable fulfillment of a large number of firm rules and instructions.... Is there still a place for the creativity of a person who is inclined to seek something new, of his own?

[Answer] Mikhail Mikhaylovich Gromov expressed an interesting thought in precisely this connection: "There is no higher measure of happiness than to know the joy of creativity. But to understand its nature means to understand the main thing, that creativity is impossible without enthusiasm, without daring and boldness." And he said these words as well: "...it is not enough to learn to fly and control an aircraft, one must learn to control himself."

For any pilot, of course, there is quite a bit of latitude for creativity. It is important only that he not exceed the limits beyond which unjustifiable risk begins. Otherwise, he is a swindler, no more and no less. The risky undertaking of one person is dangerous for many if it is not supported by clear perception, a noble objective, and a precise and sober choice of the means for its achievement.

Our best-known pilots took risks repeatedly. During the war, our aces frequently attacked the enemy with "small forces" and came out victorious thanks to their creative but always carefully thought out evaluation of their own advantages and the weaknesses of the enemy and their relationship. And there were so many times in peacetime that the pilot got his aircraft out of what seemed to be a hopeless situation, being guided not only by his knowledge and experience but also by his own sagacity. By the way, every such event adds a particle of that knowledge and experience for their colleagues, because in the review of the flight all details are analyzed and the results become the property of all.

[Question] Georgiy Andreyevich, how did you get into aviation?

[Answer] I had just finished school when the war started. My classmates and I hurried to the military commissariat. There they told us to go home and wait. I got my notice in July. My health turned out to be good enough for aviation. After that was the school for initial training and then came the academy.... That is about all that can be said about the paths to the sky. In September 1943, they found me in the aviation regiment. Combat missions started soon after that.

I distinctly remember the moment when I was over the sea for the first time. I understood right away that water under the wings is not at all the same thing as mother earth. Our group of four aircraft had just started to move away from the shore when it seemed that my engine was not working quite right. I wanted to turn back. And in general, the indescribably distressing feeling crept in that I had been thrown to the mercy of fate. Over land, after all, one can find some kind of a landing field or parachute out. But here....well, I did not know how to swim. In the mountains of Kabardino-Balkariya, where I was born and lived, there is no place to swim. My comrades over the radio encouraged me, saying: hold on, have courage, we were nervous ourselves the first time.

During the war, I shot down two planes. And I myself was shot down more than once. The first time, I landed on dry land exactly between our and the German positions. I jumped out of the airplane and leaped over a very high wire barrier almost without a running start and, without even tearing my trousers, I hurried to our own forces.

I once had to take a bath--a steamy one--with my comrade Ivan Strizhak. We barely saved ourselves in an inflatable boat when our attack plane went to the bottom. It was pure luck. We were found by fighter planes and picked up by a Be-4 aircraft. That sort of thing does not happen very often. One needs special equipment to come to the aid of people in the sea or ocean in time. Sometimes an aircraft flies along and the pilot sees those who are in trouble but is unable to do anything about it. And it is an extremely difficult matter to spot a small boat among the waves.

[Question] Georgiy Andreyevich, among the school-age youth there are a lot of kids who in their dreams see themselves in the sky over the sea. This is understandable, for it is like being a pilot, sailor and soldier in one person. In short, a conqueror of all the elements. What would you recommend to those who are really drawn to the control stick of an aircraft? For in essence they are your personnel of tomorrow, the future of naval aviation?

[Answer] To think over their choice very well. The flyers of our generation did not have this fortunate possibility. Everything was decided by the word "must," which in the army, by the way, is a synonym for "I want to." They said: "Want what is necessary!" But excellent health and thorough knowledge are often not enough. Perseverance, persistence and enthusiasm...there can be no success without these qualities. Actually, this is nothing new. And remember one other thing: the labor of a flyer-seaman differs from the work of an "overland aviator."

[Question] How?

[Answer] It is more difficult to perform the mission. When a naval aviation crew is assigned the mission of destroying a land target, they see this as a holiday, a sort of compensatory leave. I am joking, of course. But there is a measure of truth in this. Our targets are small. They are always moving--a ship, transport vessel.... Battle with the enemy often represents a duel, where the chances are approximately equal: fifty-fifty, as they say....

Well, of course, it does not hurt the kids to read something about the people of our profession. The books, for example, of Heroes of the Soviet Union Vasilii Golubev, Zakhar Sorokin and Mikhail Avdeyev and various collections of documentary stories. Mandatory is Mikhail Lvov's book, "Parol--Baltika" [Password--Baltic], about the flyers of the first guard regiment, in which 33 Heroes of the Soviet Union served. This regiment was the one that bombed Berlin in August 1941. One can obtain the literature in any good library.

[Question] Have you personally taught anyone the profession of flying? What does one think about when the aircraft of a young pilot takes off?

[Answer] One thinks about a soft landing. It is the most natural and almost automatic thought. I do not want to frighten the young people but any flight, even on a "crop duster," is a risk. In general, a flyer becomes a teacher the very minute that he receives his first post as a crew commander. Part of his responsibility is the professionalism and skill of the subordinate. As he is promoted, he remains in the role of the preceptor of those lower in rank.

This subject of the comprehension of aviation is a lengthy one. I will just say that the flight of a student is not only an evaluation of his skill but a point to the teacher and his ability and talent as a pedagogue. Here "unsatisfactoriness" are also possible. The analysis of a flight is a school for all those taking part in it. Often for a general as well. A general is also a student even when his hair is gray.

9746

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NAVAL FORCES

WORK OF BUOY TENDER DISCUSSED

Moscow KRSNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 23 Aug 86 p 1

[Article by Captain Third Rank V. Mikhaylov: "Under the Kil -- An Underwater Beacon"]

[Text] What professions are found on ships and vessels! Among them are soldiers, scientists, fisherman and water carriers. The ship which this article concerns is a general purpose ship. It is a floating crane, transport, tug and floating shop. But, it seems to me, the most intriguing of the numerous "duty positions" of the ship is what its sailors respectfully call "observer" of underwater beacons.

By its "certificate" it is called the Kil -- Kilektor -- which in translation from the Dutch means a ship (mooring lighter) with a special device in the nose or stern.

Outwardly the Kil resembles a port in miniature. Cranes, winches, a railroad with platforms, cargo hold, shops where mechanics, turners, milling machine operators, welders and toolsmiths can work.

The crew of the Kil for six years in a row already has maintained the title of a collective of Communist labor, and is one of the best in the unit. It has been led for nearly two five-year plans by reserve officer N. Perun, whose overall naval service is nearing a quarter century. After seafaring school he became a ship's navigator. Then he was second assistant and then senior assistant on the Black Sea Fleet tanker Istra. His last two duties were as the senior assistant commander and captain of the Kilektor.

Perun considers his first voyage as captain to have been his most difficult. For many months they worked at sea. The water temperature was 32 degrees centigrade and the air temperature some 50 degrees. The nearest "land" was a volcanic island. High humidity, salinity and constant heat... But, despite everything, the crew accomplished the mission of the command with honor.

On another trip, in shallow water where the ship's draft exceeded the water depth in some places, the sailors were able to set up a three-section floating pier, which in and of itself simply seemed unreal.

Today the crew has a much more modest assignment not far from our shores. It is to raise from the bottom an underwater sound beacon (PZM) weighing many tons, ready another PZM to replace it and set it evenly on the bottom.

First it was necessary for the ship to be positioned with its stern exactly over the beacon and to hold fast at that point, so that neither waves, nor wind, nor current could move the Kil. Figuratively speaking, it had to weave a spider web out of chains and hawsers and secure itself in its center. By pulling or releasing the "threads" of the hawsers, secured in barrels, the ship could even move about in the area and hold itself firmly at the required point.

At a special plotting board, officers R. Panchenko, V. Bekin, A. Demin and the Kil's captain, taking numerous factors into account, determined the place to drop the anchor and barrels and the procedure for coordination, and they discussed the details of the forthcoming work.

In the morning the Kil began to raise the first barrel. The captain himself sat at the control panel of the ship's crane and the huge grapple anchor obediently hung above the barrel, which was lined at the bottom of the cargo hold. A turn of the lever and the concrete mass, steel chain and barrel slowly rose and then, according to the captain's precise calculation came to a stop at the special platforms. Then boatsman I. Sobenko, using another crane, helped the sailors climbing on the barrel to carry out their rigging work. The platform started to roll along the rails to the aftercastle, where by means of a gin tackle the heavy structure was carried out behind the stern, lowered into the water, and the vessel started out to the place it was to be set.

Chains, hawsers, gin tackle, winches, cranes... the equipment here is heavy and bulky. One link of a Galle chain, for example, weighs more than 100 kilograms. A hawser winch lifts goods weighing tens of tons. And the most powerful "muscle" on the Kil is the hydraulic stopper, which is used to dig out the concrete mass from the mud, and "presses" several hundred tons.

The wind picked up and the Kil, steaming out from behind a cape, immediately "felt" the increased strength of the waves. The barrel dancing off the stern looked like a gigantic sledgehammer, ready to strike the stern counter. But it was too late to go back. Paying out the anchor chain and overworking the machinery, the ship "aimed" its stern at the tiny orange bouy marking the place the barrel was to be emplaced.

The Kil was firmly secured by its anchor and the barrels, and its stern hung precisely over the underwater sound beacon which was to be lifted from the water.

The signal cable attached to the PZM was wound up. Ye. Rebrikov, the second electrician, seated at the panel of the "kilektor" device, began to raise the beacon. The heavy structure took 15 minutes to come to the surface. With the help of the gin tackle it was placed carefully, like a crystal vase, on the trolley.

A cable party was included in the work. It carried out a "surgical operation," removing one beacon from the electrical artery and connecting another. Then the PZM was slowly lowered into the water from the stern.

The coastal shelf has a complex profile and it is difficult to find even a small flat area. But the crew of the Kil set down the PZM without any list, as was confirmed by the divers from the rescue ship Mikhail Rudnitskiy.

The "spider web" put out by the Kil was removed. The barrels were again onboard, the anchor was raised. The course is set to the next underwater sound beacon, which also needs to be removed.

9069

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MILITARY EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MILITARY-LEGAL EDUCATION

Moscow SOTSIALISTICHESKAYA ZAKONNOST in Russian No 7, 1986 pp 40-41

[Article by A. Koblikov, doctor of legal sciences, Honored RSFSR Jurist: "50th Anniversary of Military-Legal Education in the USSR"]

[Text] The RKKA [Workers' and Peasants' Red Army] Military-Legal Faculty was established in the All-Union Legal Academy by a resolution of the USSR Central Executive Committee on 17 June 1936. Thus, 50 years ago specialized training of cadres began for the law enforcement organs operating in the Armed Forces. Prior to this military tribunals and military prosecutors' offices were staffed by graduates of general educational institutions.

The military-legal faculty was charged with training highly qualified military legal and scientific workers for the RKKA, as well as with developing theoretical and practical military-legal matters. The establishment of the faculty was assigned to the chairman of the Military Collegium, USSR Supreme Court and the RKKA Chief Military Prosecutor.

In 1939 the military-legal faculty was reorganized into the Military-Legal Academy, within the system of the People's Commissariat of Defense. This was done to further raise the quality of training of highly qualified military-legal personnel for the Red Army and to carry out scientific research in the field of military legislation. The first graduation of students from the Military-Legal Academy took place in May 1940.

Thus, during socialist construction in a difficult international environment the Soviet state established a system of military-legal education. It was called upon to contribute to strengthening legality and law and order in the Armed Forces and to develop scientific foundations for improving military legislation. The Great Patriotic War showed with particular clarity the necessity and timeliness of this decision.

By that time the Military-Legal Academy had already had experience in organizing the training process, taking into account the special features of the military-legal profession, as well as experience in scientific work on military-legal problems and on supporting the students with appropriate literature. The war necessitated the restructuring of military-legal education in accordance with the exceptional conditions of wartime, greater

intensity of the training and indoctrination process, expansion of the student contingent and intensification of the professional military thrust of training. In summer 1941 the scheduled and early graduation of students from the Military-Legal Academy took place. Courses for accelerated training of military lawyers were created in the academy. Their graduates were sent into the active army. Academy graduates displayed staunchness and courage in fulfilling their professional and military duty. Many received combat awards. They were distinguished by utter devotion to the socialist fatherland and a high level of theoretical and practical training.

During the Great Patriotic War and the post-war years a scientific-pedagogical collective, which combined prominent scholars and pedagogs and enjoyed well-deserved authority in the legal community took shape and operated fruitfully in the Military-Legal Academy. The prominent Soviet scholars S. Golunskiy, M. Strogovich, Ye. Korovin, I. Traynin, V. Chkhikvadze, M. Avdeyev, S. Bratus, A. Vinberg, P. Galanza, A. Gertsenzon, D. Karev, A. Lunev, V. Menshagin, I. Pobezhimov, S. Potapov, S. Studenikin, S. Yushkov, N. Farberov, etc., made a significant contribution to the development of problems of military law and the training and indoctrination of military legal cadres.

In 1956 the Military-Political Academy imeni V. I. Lenin became the center of military-legal education, and since 1974 the Military Red Banner Institute in which the Military-Legal Faculty is located has been carrying out the training of military-legal cadres.

From the moment that military-legal education was established, traditions also began which the command, political department and party organization of the Military Institute and the leadership and professional instructors of the Military-Legal Faculty pay a great deal of attention to preserving and developing.

The consistent implementation of the principle of party-mindedness in all training and indoctrination, scientific research and methodological work forms one of the most important bases of military-legal education. Faculty graduates are trained and indoctrinated in the spirit of utter devotion to the socialist homeland, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, and a high sense of communist consciousness. They persistently seek to master Marxist-Leninist Theory. The teaching of social, legal and military sciences and the entire tenor of life in the training period help form a scientific world outlook and turn theoretical knowledge into convictions and readiness to implement party policy actively, with practical deeds.

The high theoretical level of training of cadres is traditional for military-legal education. Concern about raising the scientific qualifications of professors and instructors, and its thrust toward active scientific research activity facilitates this. A constellation of prominent scholars, who created the system of military-legal education, founded this tradition. It is noteworthy that among the scholars who are actively developing legal science in our day as well, a notable place belongs to those who received higher education and first became involved in scientific activity within the walls of the military-legal higher educational institution. These include V. Kudryavtsev, A. Bakhov, R. Belkin, N. Zagorodnikov, V. Kazimirchuk,

The CPSU poses the task of restructuring higher education, improving the quality of specialist training and developing the material base of the higher school. Realizing these decisions signifies a new qualitative stage in the training of cadres for law enforcement organs operating in the Armed Forces. Improving military-legal education will, in the final analysis, help to increase the self-discipline and discipline of the personnel and further strengthen legality and law and order in the Armed Forces -- an important component of their combat capability.

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9069

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M. Karpushin, M. Kozyr, A. Kositsyn, N. Krasnov, Ye. Skripilev, V. Smolyarchuk, N. Struchkov, B. Teterin, I. Petrukhin, G. Changuli and others.

Today a skilled scientific pedagogical collective is working at the Military Institute and others.

Today a skilled scientific pedagogical collective is working at the Military Institutes A. Artsibasov, Kh. Akhmetshin, N. Kuznetsov, V. Luneyev, V. Maslov, V. Strekozov, A. Ter-Akopov and other legal scholars at the Military Institute are developing topical problems of Soviet military law and military aspects of international law, and conducting training and indoctrination of future military lawyers.

Military-legal education is based on close ties with the law enforcement organs operating in the Soviet Armed Forces, and takes into account the tasks facing them and the conditions in which they carry out their functions. A link with life and with the demands of practice is a necessary prerequisite for the successful accomplishment of training-indoctrination and scientific tasks. It is realized through different channels. During training exercises instructors make extensive use of information from court, prosecutor's and investigative practice and acquaint the students with the characteristic processes and phenomena in the life of the troops and the activity of commanders, political organs and military lawyers in strengthening military order and discipline. Practitioners are regularly brought in to conduct classes at the Military-Legal Faculty. Faculty departments carry out consultations, helping to solve difficult questions of the application of law which arise in the military legal organs. Faculty scholars take part in the development of normative documents regulating questions of the life and activity of the Armed Forces, and in the preparation of summary documents and practical recommendations by the military justice leadership organs. In the training of young specialists, serious attention is devoted to arming them not only with thorough theoretical knowledge, but also with practical skills. Practical work by the students within the organs of the military prosecutor's office and in military tribunals serve this purpose in particular.

The overwhelming majority of graduates of the Military-Legal Faculty in various years are working successfully within the military justice organs, demonstrating models of irreproachable fulfillment of their duty, high principles, fairness and a high level of professionalism in accomplishing crucial tasks in protecting socialist legality in the Armed Forces. They are capably and uncompromisingly waging the struggle against those who infringe upon USSR security, the combat effectiveness and combat readiness of its Armed Forces, military discipline and established procedure for the conduct of military service, and strictly observe the norms of Soviet law and morality.

Under modern conditions, when the 27th CPSU Congress has posed the grand tasks of multiplying the might of the country, raising the material and spiritual standard of living of the Soviet people to a qualitatively new level, and increasing the creative influence of the example of socialism as a social system on world development, and when the role and responsibility of law enforcement organs is increasing, demands on cadre training are also rising.

FOREIGN MILITARY AFFAIRS

INCREASED TEMPO OF U.S. STRATEGIC FORCES DEVELOPMENT

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 15 Jul 86 p 3

[Article by F. Andreyev under the rubric "Commentary Regarding": "They Are Accelerating Development"]

[Text] The purpose of Washington's decision to stop observing the Soviet-American strategic offensive arms limitation agreement was to give itself a free hand to fully implement the so-called "comprehensive strategic program for re-arming America," thereby destroying the strategic military parity between the USSR and the USA to its advantage.

Today, the USA is working rapidly to modernize and build up all components of the strategic Triad and to provide this weapon with the ability to deliver a nuclear, "disarming" first strike. Specifically, B-52 bombers continue to be rearmed with ALSM long-range cruise missiles. Series production of the new B-1B supersonic heavy bomber has been started. The "invisible" ATV bomber, using Stealth technology, is being developed at an accelerated pace. It is planned for the U.S. Strategic Air Command to have 130 of these bombers by the mid-'90s.

In its adventuristic plans for gaining military superiority over the USSR and the Warsaw Pact, the Pentagon has assigned a prominent place to the development of a new air-based cruise missile designated the ASM. The American press reports that with respect to such combat qualities as range, survivability, reliability and simplicity of operation, it should considerably surpass the present ALSM cruise missile.

It is anticipated that series production of the ASM will start and strategic aircraft will begin to be armed with it in 1987-88. It is planned to produce 1,500 of the new missiles over a period of several years. Because of this the Pentagon has revised downward its program for producing the existing ALSM missile and plans to halt production of the missile by the end of this year, bringing the total number to 1,715. It is thus planned to have around 3,200 long-range nuclear cruise missiles in the arsenal at the beginning of the '90s. Each of them represents the equivalent of up to 200 kilotons of TNT. It is planned to arm around 200 strategic bombers with these missiles.

In addition, the public has learned of plans worked out by the Pentagon for creating and acquiring 1,900 SREM-2 air-to-surface nuclear missiles for strategic bombers. In the '90s they will replace the SREM missiles presently in the

arsenal. The new missile will have greater striking accuracy, greater reliability and improved operating features.

And so, even this far-from-complete information which has leaked to the press proves irrefutably that by halting further observance of the SALT II Treaty, the Reagan Administration plans to strive for military superiority over the USSR.

11499

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FOREIGN MILITARY AFFAIRS

OFFENSIVE CHARACTER OF ROGERS' PLAN, NATO

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 15 Jul 86 p 3

[Article by Maj Gen (Res) L. Korzun, Candidate of Military Sciences: "NATO--Imperialism's Strike Force"]

[Text] Speaking in London not so long ago, U.S. Secretary of State G. Schultz stated: "One sometimes hears it said that the danger of war in Europe is growing." And then, casting aside diplomatic language, he snapped categorically: "That is nonsense." According to Schultz "the strength of the North Atlantic alliance" is the guarantee of peace and stability in Europe.

The attempt to pass off black as white and vice versa is a result of political Daltonism, to put it mildly. The pathogens which produce this "illness" are arrant anticommunism and anti-Sovietism, on the one hand, and the aggressiveness and expansionism which are a part of the very nature of capitalism, on the other. Facts are very stubborn things, as we know, and they prove without a doubt that NATO is a thoroughly imperialistic and aggressive bloc.

V.I. Lenin precisely defined the origin and the nature of imperialist alliances. He emphasized the fact that "whatever form these alliances take--whether it be one imperialist coalition against another or a general alliance of all the imperialist powers," they prepare wars and in turn, grow out of wars...." All of the economic, political and military upheavals of the 20th Century resulting from the activities of imperialistic alliances have totally and completely confirmed the correctness of this position. It is also valid with respect to NATO. The almost 40 years of existence of this military-political bloc and all of its activities have shown that it constitutes the strike force of modern imperialism.

From the very beginning the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was founded as one of the main means employed by U.S. imperialism to establish world supremacy for itself. We know that the NATO treaty was signed in Washington in April of 1949. A top-secret memorandum, No. 7, was issued by the U.S. National Security Council a year before, in March of 1948. It has now been declassified because of its age. "It is vitally important to U.S. security," it states, "to destroy the forces of world communism led by the Soviets. This cannot be achieved with a defensive policy. The U.S. must therefore take upon itself the role of directing the organization of a worldwide counteroffensive for purposes of mobilizing and strengthening our own forces and the anticommunist forces of the non-Soviet world, as well as for undermining the strength of the communist forces."

This is the political and strategic military foundation laid beneath the edifice of the NATO bloc by Washington. In the light of this cynical program principle, a principle which has been retained in its entirety up to the present time, it is not difficult to see how hypocritical are the assertions of "Atlantists" of various kinds about NATO's role in preserving peace and stability in Europe.

NATO's anti-Soviet, antisocialist direction has intensified over the years. World imperialism's far-reaching, aggressive designs are linked precisely to this bloc. While prior to World War II they counted on using Hitlerite Germany as the main strike force of the anti-Soviet detachment, the reliance is on NATO today. Imperialism turned Europe into a "powder magazine" at that time; it has now turned it into a "nuclear dump."

We know that Washington has imposed upon NATO the famous concept of "the deeply echeloned strike," also known as the "Rogers Plan." This strategic concept, which is passed off as "defensive," is an adaptation of the American AirLand Battle concept for the capabilities of the European NATO nations. Both are based on inflicting a preventive strike to the entire depth of the strategic disposition of Warsaw Pact forces and against the most important facilities of the Warsaw Pact nations with high-precision conventional, nuclear and chemical weapons. How could this concept or the North Atlantic bloc's other strategic principles be regarded as defensive when General Rogers himself states: "The NATO command will be first to employ nuclear weapons if the appropriate situation develops"? And that the U.S. administration and the military elite are creating the situation needed for their aggressive actions--without even considering the opinion of their NATO allies--can be judged just from the American predatory attack against Libya.

There are presently more than 7,000 [units] of American nuclear ammunition in Western Europe. By deploying Pershing II and cruise first-strike nuclear missiles there the USA is making hostages of its NATO allies.

The next step taken by the administration in Washington was to twist the arms of its European allies to step up the conventional-arms race. In an interview with the French newspaper FIGARO President Reagan demanded that "the NATO partners do everything within their power to enhance the fighting efficiency of their armed forces." And this at a time when the bloc's joint armed forces constitute an enormous war machine. Even in peacetime the armed forces of the NATO nations have 6 million men in the regular forces--9.5 million, counting reserves. According to the foreign press the NATO nations have more than 3 million servicemen, over 3,000 [units] of nuclear delivery means, more than 4,000 combat aircraft, 17,000 tanks in the forces and another 8,000 at depots, in Europe alone. Washington is succeeding in involving its European partners in the development and production of new weapon systems which approach tactical nuclear weapons in power.

With respect to nuclear weapons, a notable statement was made by Italian General (Retired) Nino Pasti, who once served as deputy commander in chief for nuclear weapons for NATO's Joint Armed Forces in Europe: "It is perfectly clear that the side which attempts to achieve a first-strike capability must have nuclear superiority. There was a reason why the NATO forces first began to be armed with more and more new types of nuclear weapons. It is the NATO nations which attempted and continue to attempt to destroy the strategic military parity and gain superiority over the Soviet Union."

We must also not forget that the strategic military parity between the USSR and the USA, between the Warsaw Pact Organization and NATO, is an historic achievement by socialism of truly international importance. This is because it has refuted the calculations of imperialism with respect to gaining a victory in a nuclear war by consolidating the position of the Soviet Union, the other socialist nations and all progressive forces. Preserving this parity is a major factor with respect to maintaining peace and international security. This is what the oversea and other "Atlantists" are threatening!

The United States was the main initiator of the imperialist NATO bloc's establishment. It is still the bloc's main ringleader. NATO's use for the self-seeking purposes of American imperialism has intensified especially markedly under the present administration in Washington. There are more than enough examples of this: from the determined implication of the European allies in the arms race to their involvement in the implementation of the particularly dangerous "Star Wars" program.

Even the USA's NATO allies are becoming increasingly irritated by the Washington administration's lack of ceremony and arrant egoism. Such dangerous acts of the American government as the refusal to observe the SALT II Treaty and its decision to begin producing binary chemical weapons for subsequent deployment and use in a war on the European continent produced a wave of anger in Western Europe. Washington's attempt to enlarge the sphere of action of the NATO bloc in accordance with the American doctrine of "neoglobalism" was also received with undisguised alarm in the nations of Western Europe. Western Europe, the West German newspaper SUDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG states, "regards America as an unpredictable boss which wants to involve its allies in conflicts which do not concern them." Nonetheless, ruling circles of the leading European NATO nations continue to follow Washington's lead and support many of its dangerous military undertakings. They themselves sometimes initiate the production of new kinds of combat equipment.

Imperialism's reactionary forces are trying to retain NATO as their strike force no matter what. This is why the new edition of the CPSU Program states: "So long as the imperialist NATO military bloc exists, the party considers it essential to do everything possible to improve the functioning of the Warsaw Pact Organization as an instrument of collective defense against imperialism's aggressive aspirations, joint struggle for lasting peace and the expansion of international cooperation." The solidarity of the socialist nations is in the interest of each of them and in their common interest, and serves the cause of preventing a new war.

11499

CSO: 1801/232

FOREIGN MILITARY AFFAIRS

U.S. SALE OF ADVANCED CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS TO 'CLIENTS'

Moscow KRSNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Jul 86 p 3

[Article by Candidate of Economic Sciences N. Gnevushev: "Bags of Money and Kegs of Powder: The USA's Dangerous Policy With Respect to the Liberated Nations"]

[Text] Maintaining and intensifying tensions in various parts of the world--from Southeast Asia to South Africa and Central America--is an integral element in the USA's current course of exacerbating the international situation. This is leading to the exacerbation of existing explosive areas and the development of new ones. There are many of them in the zone of the developing nations.

Along with employing its own armed forces, the United States is increasingly resorting to conducting wars "by proxy"--simply stated, letting others do it. The policy is essentially one of using military-economic injections to create forces prepared to invade nations adhering to a course unsuitable to American imperialism--in Israel, Pakistan, Honduras and a number of other nations, for example.

It is a notable fact that the USA and certain of its NATO partners are saturating the most explosive areas with weapons. For example, up to 70 percent of American exports of military equipment in recent years have gone to Israel, which conducts an openly aggressive policy. By delivering weapons to its "clientele" in areas of tension and drawing developing states into the course of its neoglobal strategy, imperialism is destroying the regional balance which has developed and destabilizing the situation there. In this situation many liberated nations have been forced to take responsive steps and enhance their defense capability for purposes of repelling aggression, protecting their progressive gains and their sovereignty. And a kind of "mini-arms-race" develops.

Total military expenditures by the developing nations grew from 27 billion dollars in 1970 to more than 117 billion in 1985. Their armies have 15 million men, 60 percent of all the world's servicemen. The bulk of the military expenditures involve the importing of weapons, primarily from the USA, but from a number of other NATO nations as well.

The export of expensive weapon systems is earning enormous profits for the manufacturers of death. A deal involving the delivery of 8.5 billion dollars worth of AWACS planes and other military equipment to Saudi Arabia, as the magazine TIME put it, could prove to be a "goldmine" for improving the American balance of payments. Expanding the sale of weapons is of considerable benefit also

because it makes it possible to increase production volumes, which reduces the basic cost per unit of death-dealing product. General Dynamics, Litton Industries, Textron, Raytheon and Northrop, huge military-industrial companies of the USA, export from 20 to 51 percent of the weapons they produce.

The statistics also show that the more the weapons-[producing] money-bags profit from supplying their product to the developing states, the more frequently armed conflicts break out there. Between 1965 and 1980 exports of American weapons to 42 developing nations increased 50 percent over the figure for the previous 15 years. The number of armed conflicts in which they were used also increased by half. There has been a total of 148 local armed conflicts in Asia, Africa and Latin America since the end of World War II. The armed forces of the USA, Great Britain, France, Portugal, Spain and the Netherlands were directly involved in 64 of them. A total of 10 million people died in these "small" wars just between 1946 and 1975.

There is yet another negative aspect, a psychological one, of the arms race imposed upon the developing nations. The fact that today it is mainly a matter of conventional weapons, among other things, contributes to the minimizing and underestimation of the danger which is latent in it. In the situation in the world in which there is a lot of talk about nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, the inexperienced associate the term "conventional" with something insignificant, of little importance. Imperialism's aggressive circles take advantage of this in their own self-seeking interest.

Recently, however, the line separating conventional weapons and tactical nuclear weapons has been disappearing. Even during the aggression against Vietnam the Americans were already using such new types of weapons as cluster bombs dispersed over large areas. After some additional improvements, they were turned into so-called "sub-nuclear" bombs--that is, ammunition whose destructive force is practically equivalent to the explosion of tactical nuclear warheads. Certain types of these barbarous weapons were tested by the Israeli aggressors during the attack on Lebanon in 1982. The vacuum bomb, cluster projectiles and super-accurate electronic guidance equipment are particularly dangerous when they are aimed at heavily populated areas. Limitations which apply to nuclear weapons do not extend to conventional weapons, of course. It is therefore easy to imagine the danger posed by including "sub-nuclear" types of weapons in the process of stockpiling weapons in the developing nations.

The United States is flooding with weapons, including extremely sophisticated weapons, those nations which openly demonstrate unfriendly and ominous intentions toward their neighbors. Large shipments of weapons are being delivered to Thailand, for example. And Pol Pot bands systematically attack the peaceful population of Cambodia from that nation's territory under the cover of Thai artillery. Generous American military support is going to Pakistan, whose policy is of great concern to India and which has been turned into a staging area for aggression against Afghanistan. Large quantities of American weapons are sent to Honduras, which has become a staging area for subversive actions by the Pentagon and the CIA against Nicaragua. Experience has shown that weapons sold by the West are ultimately designated for expanding and intensifying the struggle against liberated nations with a socialist orientation and the national liberation movement, for supporting imperialism's neocolonial policy. The "mini-race"

is therefore raising local conflicts to a new level, enlarging them on a regional and global scale and giving them considerably more dangerous scope.

The fabulous profits reaped by the American and other military-industrial monopolies from the ever-increasing shipments of weapons to the developing nations are resulting in serious social and economic losses for the latter. A group of UN specialists have made some remarkable calculations. They show that for an average developing state with a population of 8.5 million and a per capita income of 350 dollars per year, each 200 million dollars in military imports from the USA increases the number of deaths per 1,000 births by 20 and the number of illiterates per 100 adults by 14, and reduces the average life expectancy by 3-4 years. And weapon imports are increasing, as we can see.

It is therefore not surprising that the militarization being imposed upon the developing nations by imperialism is producing social conflicts and exacerbating tensions. And consequently, outbursts of popular rage. One does not have to look far for examples. We need only to recall the collapse of the pro-American Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua and the fall of the military regime in Argentina. Extremely acute social crises are presently being experienced by the military dictatorial regimes in South Korea and Pakistan and by the murderous junta in Chile. Reality is demonstrating that even solid American support in the form of weapon shipments, military and other aid are not capable of saving from collapse regimes conducting the antinational foreign and domestic policy which suits Washington.

"The military force in which the USA puts its faith for preserving the status quo, protecting the interests of the monopolies and the military-industrial complex and preventing further progressive reforms in the liberated nations," the Political Report to the 27th Party Congress from the CPSU Central Committee states, "can only complicate the situation and produce new conflicts. The moneybags can turn into powder kegs."

The freeing of the material resources spent on the arms race and the development of man's inexhaustible creative capabilities--this is what the Soviet Union calls for. This is what should define the policy of states, including the liberated states, at the juncture of the 20th and 21st centuries. The principle of "weapons instead of development" imposed by militarism must be replaced by the reverse order of things: disarmament for development.

11499

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FOREIGN MILITARY AFFAIRS

SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY THREAT TO NEIGHBORING STATES VIEWED

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 19 Jul 86 p 3

[Article by V. Silanin: "A Staging Area for Acts of Sabotage and Provocation"]

[Text] In the ruins of a home in Harare, demolished in a bloody raid by the South African military on three neighboring African nations, among cartridge shells trampled into the earth by soldiers' boots, a foreign correspondent found a leaflet left by the bandits. "We want to live in peace with the people of Zimbabwe," it cynically proclaimed. "But we shall pursue and destroy the terrorists from the ANC wherever they are." (This is what the racists call patriots from the African National Congress fighting the apartheid regime.--V.S.).

We can see that the racist regime of the Republic of South Africa, following the example of its benefactors from the USA, attempts to justify as a struggle against terrorism its aggressive policy against the independent states of Africa, the death and sorrow of innocent, peaceful inhabitants. But not long before that piratical raid, the racist regime in the Republic of South Africa had set out on a path of armed confrontation with the peoples of liberated Africa. In response to the growth of the national liberation struggle in southern Africa, the rulers in Pretoria began an unprecedented buildup of the armed forces and the police, as well as the active development of a military infrastructure in the northern part of the country, which was assigned the role of staging area for carrying out strikes against African states.

The construction of three military air bases in Northeast [sic] Transvaal was among the first steps taken in this direction. According to reports in the South African press itself, one of them was built in the Pietersburg district. A squadron of Sabre jet aircraft were transferred there, and radar stations produced by the British firm of Marconi were set up. Another base was built in the district of Nelspurt [sic]. Its purpose was to provide for ground and aerial patrolling of the border areas. Another base was built at Dannetter. The headquarters of the Republic of South Africa's 40th Air Squadron and the nation's largest military air training center were located there. Pretoria then announced plans for the construction of a new air base in the area of Louis Trichardt in the North Transvaal, near the border with Zimbabwe. What purpose do these bases serve? Republic of South Africa's President Pieter Botha answered this question without beating around the bush: "South Africa's sphere of influence extends to the territories of all its neighbors."

In order to successfully conduct its acts of aggression against the young African nations, the Republic of South Africa's racist regime placed various systems of military equipment, obligingly provided by England, along its borders. The London newspaper TIMES reported that the British Plessey firm provided Pretoria with mobile radar stations. When the British government was sharply criticized in connection with this transaction, concluded in violation of the UN embargo on weapons sales to the Republic of South Africa, London hastened to state that this equipment has only peaceful application. However, this did not prevent the British from setting up the very same radar stations on one of the Falkland Islands, which they turned into one of the largest military bases in the South Atlantic. It was this kind of radar station, set up at (Maripскоп) in the northeastern part of the Transvaal, which guided aircraft of the Republic of South Africa during their piratical raids in Zimbabwe and Botswana. It was also used for airlifting weapons to bandits from the so-called "Mozambique National Resistance," who are engaged in terrorist activities in the southern part of Mozambique.

Zionist Israel is also doing its bit to supply the racist Republic of South Africa with weapons. With its help Pretoria is presently modernizing its northern "border wall," which includes [the installation] of observation posts, super-sensitive electronic tracking devices and high-voltage electric-wire barriers. Large sections of South Africa's border with Zimbabwe are similarly outfitted.

Military development in the northern regions of the Republic of South Africa includes the reconstruction and expansion of existing highways there to be used as runways for combat aircraft if necessary. According to AP reports, the construction of two such dual-purpose highways has now been completed: one in the area of Swartotter, only 20 kilometers from the border with Botswana, the other in North Natal.

Since Zimbabwe proclaimed its independence, it has been a constant target of the racist Republic of South Africa's aggressive aspirations. From the very first days of the young state's existence, the South African generals began patching together units and subunits from remnants of the former Rhodesian army and hiring mercenaries to conduct subversive activities against Zimbabwe. According to Radio Harare, a total of 5,000 saboteurs and terrorists were trained. These bandit elements have been directly involved in criminal attacks on schools, farms, establishments and transportation facilities in Zimbabwe.

Suffice it to say that in 1985 alone, Zimbabwe's security forces disarmed more than 400 bandits sent in from the Republic of South Africa and captured a considerable quantity of weapons produced in South Africa. Most of these bandits admitted that they had trained under white instructors at camps in the North Transvaal. The number of casualties among the peaceful population is growing in the course of this undeclared war, and the nation's economy is suffering considerable losses.

The aggressive actions of the regime in the Republic of South Africa are evoking a sharp protest from the government of Zimbabwe. Information Minister Nathan Shamuyarira, for example, has stated that the nation's government is well informed about plans to create in Zimbabwe a terrorist group like the anti-Angolan UNITA or the "Mozambique National Resistance." And State Security Minister Emmerson Munangagwa has accused the racist regime in the Republic of South Africa of constantly violating Zimbabwe's national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

And so, despite constant assurances of peace by the rulers of the Republic of South Africa, the Pretoria regime has for many years not only been threatening the independent states of Africa but also implementing its own aggressive plans. The rulers of the Republic of South Africa have presently turned their nation into a staging area for constant acts of sabotage and provocation against its neighbors. It was therefore not surprising that the leaders of states at the front in the southern part of Africa, who held an emergency meeting in Luanda following the bandit raid by the South African military against the capitals of Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe, have decided to enhance the defense capability of their nations.

11499

CSO: 1801/232

FOREIGN MILITARY AFFAIRS

GROWTH OF JAPANESE FORCES IN 'NORTHERN SECTOR'

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 15 Jul 86 p 3

[Article by V. Vinogradov under the rubric "An Observer's Opinion": "Dangerous Plans: Japan--on the Path of Militarism"]

[Text] A report has come out of Tokyo that the Japan Defense Agency is working out a new program for building up the strength of the nation's ground forces. Its scale can be judged from the fact that the program will extend to the end of this century and will cost the astronomical amount of more than 6 trillion yen.

This is apparently how Japan's ruling circles have decided to respond to Washington's calls for it to increase its contribution to the West's militaristic endeavors. The fact should be emphasized that in their strategic designs the leaders of the Japan Defense Agency are devoting their main attention to the so-called "northern sector." They are planning to reinforce the grouping of forces on the northernmost island of Hokkaido and the northern regions of the island of Honshu. Among other things, it is planned to double or triple the number of missile complexes and combat helicopters deployed there and to significantly reinforce the armored formations based there. Furthermore, according to the newspaper ASAHI, the program provides for keeping 80,000 servicemen (almost half of all Japan's ground forces) on Hokkaido and in the northern part of Honshu in peacetime, and for increasing the number to 110,000 men in emergency situations.

Symptomatically, the program is still in the development stage but Japan's military department, whipping up anti-Soviet hysteria, has even now turned the nation's north into an arena of large-scale maneuvers. The newspaper YOMIURI reports that they are being conducted under conditions approaching actual combat as nearly as possible. The Japanese command has moved large military formations from the southern island of Kyushu to Hokkaido to take part in this militaristic demonstration. In addition, naval and air forces ordinarily based far from Hokkaido are taking part for the first time in such maneuvers. A total of 200 aircraft and seven combat ships have been sent there.

It would be appropriate to mention the following here. The leaders of the Japan Defense Agency previously gave the appearance of considering the nation's constitution, which proclaims Japan's rejection of war as a means of resolving international conflicts, and stated that the main purpose of various military

exercises was to practice "defensive operations." A new trend has recently become apparant in Japan's militaristic games, however. Today, the naneuvers increasingly consist of offensive operations. Precisely this kind of operations are presently being practiced by the "self-defense forces" on Hokkaido.

The plan worked out by the Japan Defense Agency for building up the ground forces and for having the "self-defense forces" practice openly offensive operations is provocational and is evoking deep concern on the part of the public both in Japan itself and beyond its borders.

11499

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AFGHANISTAN

LIFE AMONG MIG-23 PILOTS IN DRA RECOUNTED

Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 17 Jun 86 p 3

[Article by A. Borovik, special correspondent, Limited Contingent of Soviet Forces in the DRA: "'MiG' in Operation"]

[Text] At four in the morning the rain slacked up. I turned up the collar on my jacket and left the squat cottage in which I spent a sleepless night under the air conditioner monotonously driving the hot night air in. It was infused with the unknown scents of Afghan grasses and a little sweetish smell of aviation fuel exhaust.

Dawn broke languidly, as though it were the ashes from yesterday's campfire. To the west tracer rounds eerily and silently flashed. From time to time you could hear the asthmatic cough of a heavy machine gun.

Along the air strip a slack eared dog streaked with red from the dawn's rays jogged along. The fighter roaring at about a hundred decibels which stood not far away and the row of other aircraft did not, judging by everything, have any effect on him.

Rain falling in the exhaust area of the aircraft evaporated before it even touched the ground.

A tiny dot which appeared at the other end of the airfield grew in the green "Wazi" from which a vigorously whipped man with a protective helmet under his arm and an oxygen mask in his hand jumped while it was still moving. This was fighter squadron commander Lt Col Karlov. I would not have thought him more than 30 years old if it had not been for the completely grey hair and the faded--both from the bright Afghan sun and everything that they had been here--eyes. It is strange, although common, to see the combination of youth and its absence. It is as if it is drained from the man. In a very quiet, calm voice he said:

"Let's just go to the doctor for a minute: In 10 minutes we will be part of a flight. The Afghans have asked us to support them. They are being pressed at Ishkamish by two bands and according to intelligence data, a caravan with weapons is crawling toward them to give them support. It will also be necessary to strike them. Okay, I'll wait here." Yevgeniy Grigoryevich

turned around to the smiling small-statured mechanic who was wiping off his freckled face using the sleeve of his blue overalls which were soaked by the rain.

The lone doctor in the whole squadron, Major Bozhko, silently criticized the fact that my pressure was lowered because of the heat and handed me a tiny plastic shot glass with an effervescent solution which he said was a mixture of glucose, ascorbic acid and something else:

"In a minute your pressure will be okay for a fighter aircraft. Is it good?"

"Disgusting."

"This," the doctor didactically raised his finger, "is not the body of a military pilot. His body is a tool for accomplishing military missions and therefore must function precisely, without breaking down. Like an onboard instrument. Otherwise it works against you."

In the next room, a lounge area for those who have already made their bombing runs, was a homemade billiards table. During MiG takeoffs and landings, only true aces can play on it: the balls rattle against each other like teeth chattering in January. The doctor picked out a helmet lying on the next table which was about my size and took an airmask, helmet headset and a whole pile of equipment which had to be donned before getting into the cockpit of the "sparka."

Sitting in front, Karlov laid the map out on his lap and was once again looking over the small orientation points. He immediately blended with the aircraft into one organic whole. The control stick became an extension of his hand and the pedals -- of his feet. From that point on, the whole power of the fighter was his power.

I strapped myself into the harness and it held me tightly in the seat. The sensation is exactly the same as if you were cemented in. All of the freedoms given are concentrated into a single one -- the freedom to select between breathing in and breathing out. The rubber hose for the KM-32 airmask connected me to the fighter like an umbilical cord. The doctor, balancing on the ladder attached to the side, showed me two levers:

"Your main task," he shouted to me so that I would be able to hear him through the helmet, "is to avoid touching these. Only in extreme emergency -- they are for the ejection seat!"

Naturally, the imagination colorfully fills in the situation with gripping detail in which it would be necessary to pull one of the levers. And what if during the ejection a leg is stuck between instruments? And suddenly the lamp comes on? At that moment I was hit by a warm stream of oxygen from the mask and breathing became easier.

Karlov looked over the instruments with a skilled eye: all the indicators, as if subordinate, were in place. He tried the on-board systems: navigation, attack angle limiter and aircraft intercom.

I pushed the lever to the left and the lamp fizzled out. While clapping, he crackled mechanically, breaking me out of my inner world. Drops of sweat rolled from the edge of the mask burning my eyes.

Karlov started the engine and began to move slowly to the airstrip. Behind, dozens of meters to the rear of the aircraft, the exhaust flattened the grass. Floating along on the left was the figure of the doctor. He put his hands together and said something inaudible, like in a silent movie.

"He always sees us off at takeoff," Karlov nodded toward the doctor. His quiet voice coming to my ears through the wire sounded artificial and mechanical. "He absolves us of our sins."

The MiG-23 was locked in place. It shook nervously a little. The setter sets the post precisely. The shaking is transmitted to those inside. Karlov requests permission to take off. In just an instant he kicks in the afterburner: the fighter pining for the night sky breaks free.

"No, old man," I hear Karlov's voice, "don't look for the stewardess call button: she would not bring us coffee anyway."

Even taking off from Kabul or Kandar Airports (as is well known an Arian aircraft was shot down with 52 passengers on board at the latter) in comparison with this seems like a pastoral idyll. Here you are not surrounded on all sides by the comforting rumble of helicopters dropping heat simulators to protect passenger airliners from possible "surface-to-air" heat-seeking missiles.

Here from the moment the pilot breaks away from the runway, he has no doubt that he is being watched by dozens of pairs of unfriendly eyes observing him from camouflaged caves with twin machine guns.

Reaching 5900 meters in just moments, we tear through the breaks in the clouds and at this altitude try not to lag behind the leading aircraft and his wingman by more than 600 meters.

The synchronization of the barely discernable actions of the pilots convinces one of the fact that it seems that it is in their very heartbeat.

The thoughts and imagination flash with wild speed through the brain satiated with oxygen. They fly at the rear leaving in their "exhaust" as the aviators say space. The horizon moves and the view is almost infinite space. And it often occurs to you that you are just a grain in it.

Through the predawn smoke the copper helmet of the sun rose up as if from a foxhole under machinegun fire. Five minutes out, the feeling arose that the fighter, like a helicopter, was hovering and that the planet below turned faster and faster. Mountains broke away and ocean waters and kishlaks built of clay were torn away from the horizon. They were pulled to the rear exactly as if there were a powerful vacuum cleaner behind to clean out the space in front.

The noise from the engines is left behind, and one seems to be in the embrace of a great silence and then you can clearly hear even the slightest noise in the cockpit. The shriveled glue in the back of my notebook crackled. A paper ruble in my pocket crackled inanely: an accidental intrusion from another altitude. The farther from earth the lower its value.

The fighters were so high above earth that on looking out on the skies below the question is formed against one's will: how do we get down?

"We're going down," Karlov stated calmly. "Look forward and to the left, there is the 'breath' of the caravan. Now we will make them a little nervous."

Through breaks in the clouds the caravan could be seen along a dried up river bed. About a hundred pack animals and 15 vehicles loaded with weapons and ammunition.

Behind the caravan was a train of dust hiding the track of the Toyota tires and camel hooves. This is a frightening track. It always begins in Washington and passes through Pakistan and without doubt leads to murder. It is monstrous in its severity. It is based not only on religious fanaticism but also on U.S. dollars. America pays well for murder. It is as if in the office of the Director of the CIA there hangs a price list adopted from the nearest butcher shop. W. Casey pays well for the head of a PDPA activist, less for a sympathizer of the revolution. It is possible to make a fortune by blowing up peaceful hospital or "roddom." I have seen invalid, nursing children; women with once beautiful faces now burned and an old plowman who had lost his hands to mine fragments. This is who our Soviet pilots are protecting in Afganistan. America having been driven out of Vietnam is contributing to the mass political murder being committed in the DRA with all of its invention, imagination and soul.

...Being forced to operate at maximum parameters for altitude and speed in order to avoid being hit by "stingers" PZRK (mobile anti-aircraft missile system) and ZGU we pass through a cloud at 5000 meters. We drop down to three thousand and begin to come in with the sun at our back using the light as our ally. It was supposed to blind the "dukhs" and at the same time attract the guidance systems of the heat-seeking missiles.

Through the "television" of the photo equipment, the small figures could be clearly seen rushing and rapidly throwing up camouflage nets over the animals and vehicles. Their machineguns did not begin to stitch until the four fighters had already passed over the caravan and their bombs were falling...

And then the photo equipment which weighed about 15 pounds became heavier and dropped from my hands into my lap exactly as if it had been pulled by a strong magnet. Karlov began to break out of the dive sharply, made a counter turn and went into an anti-missile maneuver. My eyes became very dark and the image appeared that all the blood had rushed from my head. Remembering the advice from the doctor, I tightened the muscles in my legs with all my strength so that the vessels could withstand the increased flow.

Below the ground kicked up and dust swirled up with a mixture of rock.

Having come in behind the other two and gained our former altitude, we started back to Bagram and the airfield. Nothing remains of the few seconds it took for the bombing run except a sudden wash of terrible fatigue.

We passed the Salang and then, a little farther south, Karlov broke away from the other aircraft and dove, passing over one of the mountain sides at low altitude:

"There. That is where our Tokik died."

...During the time I spent at Bagram I heard much about Lt Col Levchenko, whose fighter was hit by bandits. He was a jolly fellow, the spirit of the squadron and a man who subdued everything with his pure Russian daring. On the ground he was drawn to the sky and in the sky to the earth, to friends and family. When he received a letter from his wife, he literally took off. He awaited every line from her because in Afganistan it is so necessary to be sure that you, here, and she, there, are moving in parallel in your feelings, thoughts and yearnings. That between you there is the "complete synchronization" sensations as between a flight leader and his wing man.

When a man dies, a "black hole" is formed which nothing can fill. People remember him as he was not long before his death; did he sense his fate? The doctor showed me a photograph of Anatoly Levchenko not long before his death, but there was no "mark of death" on his smiling face. With his whole appearance he seemed to be saying: "Boys, I love life terribly. I have been very lucky with friends and I am very happy." It was with this attitude that he took off then never to land again.

...We went the whole way back to the airfield in silence. But in my head pulsed the husk, heart-rending lines of Vysotskiy:

He cried at the end, while being consumed in the plane:
"You are alive, you will live!" it came through the din.
We flew up to god, close to the entrance of nirvana
He pulled up a little higher and settled in,
And I, well, came back down to terra firma...

Having returned, Karlov left the plane to the mechanics. I threw down the ammunition and sat on the hot grass beside the runway. My legs were a little numb and my ears still roared with the fighter engine noise. The flight took exactly 39 minutes and 45 seconds. But is there really a correspondence between a second spent at 5900 meters at the speed of sound and a normal earth second? How much we can squeeze into a narrow time frame...

If life is only a long flight from childhood to old age, then I just used a small section of the "mileage" allotted to me.

...That evening I sat up late with the doctor. The airfield was quiet. The fighter planes slept wingtip to wingtip. Karlov chain-smokes cigarettes and

blows out a thin stream of smoke with a strong breath. When he inhales, his face flushes orange. One of the flyers tunes a crackling radio talking and singing in all the world's languages.

We lay down to sleep, but for a long time just lay there looking into the darkness. Breathing quietly. The only thing that could be heard was an Afghan cricket scraping his miniature violin.

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